MULAN

LOYAL. BRAVE. TRUE.

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Disney presents “Mulan,” a live-action reimagining of the legendary female warrior immortalized in the centuries-old Chinese ballad. Honoring its Chinese roots, the film features an ensemble of ethnically Chinese talent of both established and rising stars.

Acclaimed filmmaker Niki Caro brings the epic tale of Mulan to life in an inspiring, thrilling adventure that follows a fearless young woman as she risks everything out of love for her family and her country to become one of the greatest warriors China has ever known. When the Emperor of China issues a decree that one man per family must serve in the Imperial Army to defend the country from Northern invaders, Hua Mulan, the eldest daughter of an honored warrior, steps in to take the place of her ailing father. Masquerading as a man, Hua Jun, she is tested every step of the way and must harness her inner strength and embrace her true potential. It is an epic journey that will transform her into an honored warrior and earn her the respect of a grateful nation…and a proud father.

Yifei Liu (“The Forbidden Kingdom,” “Once Upon a Time”) was cast as Hua Mulan following a year-long global casting search. Joining her in the film are: Donnie Yen (“Rogue One: A *Star Wars* Story,” “Ip Man”); Tzi Ma (“The Farewell,” “The Quiet American”); Jason Scott Lee (“Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: Sword of Destiny,” “Soldier”); Yoson An (“The Meg,” “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: Sword of Destiny”); Ron Yuan (“Marco Polo,” “The Accountant”); Rosalind Chao (“Plus One,” “Star Trek: Deep Space Nine”); Nelson Lee (“All Saints,” “I Was a Simple Man”); and Cheng Pei-Pei (“Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon,” “Lilting”) with Gong Li (“Memoirs of a Geisha,” “Raise the Red Lantern”) and Jet Li (“Shaolin Temple,” “Lethal Weapon 4”).

The screenplay was written by Rick Jaffa & Amanda Silver ("Jurassic World," "Rise of the Planet of the Apes") and Lauren Hynek & Elizabeth Martin, based on the narrative poem "The Ballad of Mulan." The producers are Chris Bender, p.g.a. ("A History of Violence," "Under the Silver Lake"), Jake Weiner, p.g.a. ("The Butterfly Effect," "Monster-in-Law") and Jason T. Reed, p.g.a. ("Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles") with Bill Kong ("Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon," "Hero"), Barrie M. Osborne ("The Lord of the Rings" trilogy), Tim Coddington ("Crazy Rich Asians," "Marco Polo") and Mario Iscovich ("McFarland, USA," "You Again") serving as executive producers.

Caro and the producers assembled a team of exceptional filmmakers to lend their talents to the production of "Mulan": director of photography Mandy Walker, ASC, ACS ("The Mountain Between Us," "Hidden Figures"); production designer Grant Major ("The Lord of the Rings" trilogy, "King Kong"); editor David Coulson ("Whale Rider," "The Zookeeper's Wife"); costume designer Bina Daigeler ("The Zookeeper's Wife," "Submergence"); composer Harry Gregson-Williams ("The Martian," "The Chronicles of Narnia"); hair, makeup and prosthetics designer Denise Kum ("Whale Rider," "Death Defying Acts"); visual effects supervisor Sean Faden ("Power Rangers," "Fantastic Four"); and first assistant director Liz Tan ("Spider-Man: Homecoming," "McFarland, USA").

"Mulan": A Hero's Journey

Inspired by the Chinese "Ballad of Mulan," the film brings audiences an incredible tale that celebrates the richness of Chinese culture and the power of female strength. A story that is Chinese yet transcends borders, "Mulan" reflects the breadth and depth of Chinese identity. A combination of relatable emotions with awe-inspiring action sequences and breathtaking visuals, "Mulan" is a movie with universal appeal that embodies the timeless themes of honor, family, respect for elders and duty.

Disney first interpreted the story of Mulan as an animated feature in 1998. "Mulan" was a box-office hit as well as a fan favorite and featured Ming-Na Wen as the voice of Mulan.

"The original 'Ballad of Mulan' was written centuries ago and has been popular ever since," says producer Jason Reed. "The animated movie brought it to Western audiences. Now we're hoping to take elements from the original ballad and the beloved Disney animation and create something that is new and exciting, while honoring the essential elements of this inspiring story. We focused on how someone can embrace bravery, loyalty and duty while still being true to oneself."

"What stands out about Mulan is her spirit," adds Reed. "Mulan herself is what draws me to the story. When I watched the original animated film, I loved the locations, I loved the music, I loved the comedy, but what really stuck with me was her character. Even though she's a woman and Chinese, her struggle spoke to me growing up. How do you fulfill your duty? How do you do what's right? How do you fit in and how do you find your place? I think those are really important questions, and it's the foundation on which we built the live-action adaptation."

Executive producer Bill Kong feels that today's audiences will be able to easily relate to Mulan, although the exploits of her bravery were first told centuries ago. "Mulan may have existed in stories a long time ago, but her character and her actions reflect women of today. And especially young Chinese women today. What Mulan represents is very much related to today's world and the way people think today."

Back in 2015, producing partners Chris Bender and Jake Weiner were “constantly brainstorming” fresh approaches to known intellectual properties when two writers, Lauren Hynek and Elizabeth Martin, came to them with an idea for “The Ballad of Mulan.” “We were excited to develop something different than the original animated film since the underlying legend has such strong themes of empowerment,” says Chris Bender.

Weiner and Bender took Hynek and Martin’s script to Disney, who subsequently acquired it. Weiner was excited to get Disney on board. “Mulan is a warrior, and we loved the idea of a Disney movie in which the heroine wasn’t in need of rescue and instead puts her life on the line to fight for her country and, ultimately, bring honor to her family,” explains Weiner.

Disney brought on screenwriters Rick Jaffa & Amanda Silver for additional writing and, with the producers’ guidance, the writers adapted the source materials with a deep respect. “Our biggest challenge in writing the screenplay was creating something new, while honoring the beloved stories of Mulan that came before. It was also our greatest inspiration,” the writing duo explains.

Continuing, they add, “We’re extremely proud of ‘Mulan’ because at its core, it’s an anthem to authenticity, celebrating the idea that power comes from being true to who you are.”

Jake Weiner explains the producers’ approach to the story, which informed the direction the writers embraced. “Since the ‘Ballad of Mulan’ is an important legend in Chinese culture, we knew we had to tell a culturally thoughtful version and let that be our guide in the development of the script.”

Continuing, Chris Bender says, “We were less interested in the traditional princess love story and more interested in Mulan’s internal journey at a time when women would be executed if they joined the army.”

When it came to creating the live-action film, the filmmakers wanted to explore what it was about the animated film that was so appealing. They asked people in China, Chinese Americans, and people in the Asian diaspora which themes, characters and storylines in the animated movie they really valued. What did the movie mean to them? They asked Western audiences the same question. “And the movie did not always mean the same thing to everyone,” comments Reed. “So we had to figure out how to make a new movie for a new generation that spoke to their issues and their concerns and do it within the context of this classic universal story.”

There were specific elements of the animated film that would not be jettisoned from the live-action version. “We wanted to keep the magic that was present in the animated film,” says Reed. “There are a number of very gritty versions of the Mulan story. We didn’t think that was appropriate for the Disney version. The Disney version of the movie has to have wonder and magic, and playfulness and spectacle. The result is a great mixture of action, comedy and romance—brought together to make a film that will delight audiences of all ages.”

The producers would brook no compromise when it came to choosing the director. “This movie requires a commitment to exploring other cultures, to doing the research and listening to other points of view,” explains Reed. “One of our challenges was to combine the Disney culture and the Chinese culture while being respectful to both. This is, fundamentally, the story of a young girl discovering her own power and her place in the world. We needed someone who could really dig into the depths of that character and bring her to life.”

With that in mind, a worldwide search for a director began and ultimately led the producers to Niki Caro, the award-winning New Zealand filmmaker who burst onto the international stage with the Academy Award®–nominated 2002 hit "Whale Rider." The producers felt that Caro had the expertise to handle not only the scale of the film but the cultural nuances as well. "In Niki's prior films like 'Whale Rider' and 'McFarland, USA,' she immersed herself in the different cultures of her characters. There is a sensitivity and specificity in Niki's films, and this was critical in telling a story that is based so deeply in Chinese tradition," comments producer Jake Weiner.

The producers were also impressed with Caro's vision, which aligned with their perception of the story. "Niki was hungry to make a big studio movie celebrating the warrior Mulan, and she did not want to make a princess movie. This connected with what originally excited us about telling this story," comments Bender.

"What drew me to this story was Mulan herself," says Niki Caro. "Her journey from village girl to male soldier to warrior and hero is a story that's as relevant and as resonant as it was when it was first written over fifteen hundred years ago. I had a huge vision for the live-action version, and the studio felt I could deliver on that vision.

"The vision for 'Mulan' was to tell the story in the most epic and emotional but very real way, with an updated vision and canvas," continues Caro. "Mulan as a character means so much to fans because of her essential nature. She's a dutiful daughter and a loving and courageous human being—but she's also vulnerable and fallible. Because she's disguised as a man, she can't rely on any of her usual skillset to further her journey—and neither could she ever rely on brute strength. She uses her smarts, her quick-wittedness and her strong will to overcome her many challenges and to defeat a really formidable enemy."

Caro didn't want to re-create the original animated film but rather to honor the original "Ballad of Mulan." "'The Ballad of Mulan' has been told and retold countless times over centuries," she says. "Chinese children are all taught this story. So, Mulan in China is very real and very important and very alive, even after all of this time. It's both an honor and a thrill, and a tremendous responsibility, to bring her to life in a new way, in a new time. I'm so excited for audiences to experience this new vision of Mulan."

But Caro also envisioned ways to respect the original animated movie and its fans. "I love the animation, and I wanted to bring some of its iconic elements to the live-action movie," she explains. "The avalanche scene is a good example. Live-action filmmaking is able to deliver an avalanche of such explosive power that it's going to be a real thrill for fans of the animation to see that come to life."

Retelling the story with a modern sensibility didn't mean abandoning its origins. Caro was insistent that the film respect the culture from which it springs, and her creative vision for the film truly connected with Mulan's story. Just as her dedication to authenticity and collaborating across communities created "Whale Rider" and "McFarland, USA," Caro wanted to deliver an epic film with deep cultural roots.

"It's tremendously important to me in this film, and indeed in all the movies I've made, to be thoughtful and respectful of the culture, and to be collaborative. Every department of this movie did research into Chinese culture, painting, history and accounts of war," says the director.

That research gave the film, and its tone, added depth and richness, from the characterization to the action scenes to the comedy. “There’s a great deal of levity and humor in the film, but we tried to ground it in real people and real situations, like Mulan’s relationships with her comrades. We find humor in the situation of being a girl trying to hide as a boy in a sea of men. There are more laughs than you might expect from an epic, action-adventure, war movie.”

Executive producer Bill Kong speaks for all the filmmakers when he says, “Niki will bring to the world a different feel and a different human hero than we expect. She has great sensitivity. She loves Mulan and she understands Mulan. She’s the right choice, and I very much look forward to her bringing out a very special Mulan.”

Casting the Iconic Chinese Tale

With the director on board, the next step was assembling the cast, which combines fresh new faces with renowned international stars and features ethnically Chinese talent from around the world.

Having a Chinese cast added to the kind of authenticity that the filmmakers were looking to achieve. As producer Chris Bender says, “As storytellers, we know that it’s the cultural specificity that often makes familiar story elements feel fresh and exciting—it’s what we yearn for as producers in exploring new worlds.”

After an intensive search, filmmakers were delighted to have Chinese star Yifei Liu take on the role of Mulan. Much like the character in the beloved original animated film, Mulan is determined, strong and compassionate. When each family has to provide one man to join the battle against the invaders, Mulan takes the place of her father, who suffers from an old war wound. At first she is totally out of her depth, but she learns fast and develops into a strong, powerful leader, forging new relationships along the way.

Liu was thrilled and honored to be cast in the role. She was impressed by both the screenplay’s sensitivity to the original source poem and the director, Niki Caro. “Niki is perfect,” says Liu. “Her personality just shines. I realize the amount of work that a director takes on. I can imagine that she was tired and stressed sometimes, but whenever she showed up, she was so light and happy that she made everybody feel confident.”

Continuing, she says, “I think she respects every actor and helps them to create the character. She will ask what you want, but she will always tell you if she wants something. She is very positive. I noticed that she likes a real and natural performance.”

Sharing her approach to portraying the legendary hero, Liu says, “I would say focus is really the number one. Each day I allowed myself to forget who I am for the moment. You have to kind of lose yourself and not think about just how brave Mulan is. Yes, I am playing a hero, so we need to bring out that side, but I think every human being is complex, and complex is so beautiful. And that’s where the energy of the character is.”

When Liu fully embraced her character, she shared a moment of truth with Mulan. “It’s Mulan’s inner moment when she decides to rip off her disguise,” she confesses. “She doesn’t want it

anymore, so it all comes from there, for sure. But I think it also means that she is breaking out of boundaries. It's that simple. She's realized that she deserves the freedom of being a woman and who she wants to be."

Mulan is an empowering character, and Liu hopes the film will help girls and women trust in themselves. "I hope they will not focus on just what they get in life, but will trust their instincts. Be true to themselves for sure, because they are the only ones who can surprise themselves in their lives."

"Every moment Yifei was on set she raised the bar," praises Caro. "She inspired all of us. She broke our hearts. Jaws dropped at the level of skill that she brought to this movie. Yifei is an accomplished martial artist. She can wield a sword. She's a brilliant, brilliant actress. And as if all of that wasn't enough, the girl can sing. She is indeed not only the complete package but definitely the only one that could ever have played Mulan."

Jason Reed concurs: "The movie doesn't work if the audience doesn't love and respect the character of Mulan. Our most important job was to find the right woman to play that role. We did a global search. We saw thousands and thousands of actresses, dancers, martial arts experts and singers. In the end there was one clear choice and that was Yifei Liu."

Donnie Yen plays Commander Tung, the leader of the battalion in which Mulan serves. Dignified and highly experienced on the battlefield, Tung acts as something of a mentor to Mulan.

Yen decided to join the project after being inspired by his daughter, who has watched the animated film more than 100 times, and to have the opportunity to work with Niki Caro. "It's so important that the director is a woman because the film is about a female hero," says Yen. "If I can in any way support the empowering of women, who so often do not get the same opportunities as men, then I will do it. It means a great deal to me and my family."

Yen describes Commander Tung as a father figure to Mulan and also says, "Tung is her mentor, and Mulan sees something in Commander Tung, not only his skill but also his wisdom."

For most of the film, Tung is a very imposing military leader, but there are moments in the scenes with Mulan where he shows his feelings. "I enjoyed the scenes with the conversations between Mulan and Tung," says Yen. "Those are the more sentimental moments that reveal Commander Tung's inner vision and passion. You normally don't see that because when he's in his armor, he's very strict and very military."

Yen's skills blew Niki Caro away. "One of my favorite moments on set was the first time I experienced Donnie Yen's martial arts skills in real life. As Commander Tung, he does a sword display in front of all of the recruits. My jaw hit the floor. The way that man moves, and the way he moves a sword so fast that I literally couldn't see it move in real time. It moved so fast, I had to shoot the sequence again in slow motion just so I could see what he was doing. He is astonishing."

Stepping into the shoes of the Emperor is international megastar Jet Li. Li says that his younger daughter inspired him to take the part, but he was also attracted to the story. "I think Mulan is a wonderful story," comments Li. "It was a great movie when it came out 20 years ago, but the difference is that it was animation, and this one is with people. That makes it special."

When Li read the screenplay he was struck by its sensitivity. “It was very moving and very emotional to read because Chinese people always believe in loyalty and filial devotion,” says Li. “It’s very difficult to do both well, but the ‘Mulan’ story is very special. She shows both loyalty to her country and filial devotion to her parents. It’s a wonderful story because it is showing that a human can do both.”

“It was a career highlight to work with Jet Li,” says Caro. “He brings to the role of the Emperor all the gravitas that you would expect for the Son of Heaven but he also brings tremendous heart and soul and action. So that when Jet Li’s Emperor leaves the throne to protect his people, you know it is going to go down.”

Jason Reed comments, “Jet Li is more impressive in person than I ever imagined in all of my years of fandom. I’m even more impressed, having seen him work, seeing his capabilities, his seriousness and his dedication. He is a legend. And it’s an amazing privilege to have him in the movie.”

Executive producer Bill Kong was likewise impressed. “From the Chinese point of view, Jet Li is an icon. If you asked me who would be a national hero in the movie business, I would say Jet Li. So there’s nobody more fitting to play an emperor of China than Jet Li.”

Producer Barrie Osborne agrees, adding, “Jet Li is an iconic Chinese actor, and I’ve always admired his work. He brings all of that experience and all of that high profile to his character on screen. He’s very centered and a very spiritual guy. I think he was an incredible choice, and we’re really fortunate to have him.”

Xianniang is a completely new character in the “Mulan” universe. The filmmakers wanted to bring in another female character to balance the protagonist and give another layer to the themes of identity and belonging.

Xianniang is a close ally of the film’s villain, Böri Khan. Describing the mysterious character, executive producer Barrie Osborne says, “Khan’s hidden weapon is Xianniang, who is a woman not unlike Mulan. She is physically fit and has the power of chi, an almost magical power, which gives you an incredible amount of strength. Xianniang gives Böri Khan an edge over the Chinese army.”

The filmmakers knew they needed a very special actress to bring such a powerful character to life, and they found her in Gong Li, the award-winning Chinese-born star who shot into the international spotlight in such critically lauded films as “Ju Dou,” “Raise the Red Lantern,” “The Story of Qiu Ju” and “Farewell My Concubine.”

Gong Li was drawn to the role for the opportunity to create a new character. “Mulan is widely known in China,” says Gong. “People are very familiar with the character and the story. But the character of Xianniang is new to me. In the poem, the character of Xianniang does not exist. This is a character we made up, which leaves a huge space for me to perform. It is also a challenge for me.”

Developing an approach to the character led to discussions with director Niki Caro to find out the character’s motivations and desires. Recalling those conversations, Gong says, “Niki wanted this character to be different than all the other ones by her powers and the things she desires. Xianniang is powerful, but the things that she wants are actually very simple. She wants freedom and survival.”

Xianniang and Böri Khan's relationship is one forged in mutual benefit. Says Gong, "Khan and Xianniang have a collaborative relationship. She knows the things he needs, and he knows what she wants. Xianniang wanted freedom, and he understood it. But they won't reach their goals if they don't cooperate with each other, so they formed a collaborative relationship."

Working with Jason Scott Lee, who plays Böri Khan, was a very positive experience for Gong Li. "When I first met him, he didn't have any makeup or costume on," recalls Gong. "He was full of power but very gentle when he speaks. Just a nice man. Then the next day when we were on set, I saw him wearing the makeup and in costume. I was so surprised. Like, is that him? The change was huge. The figure of Böri Khan just appeared in front of me. When he put on the costume, he became Khan."

She continues, "Jason Scott Lee is an excellent actor, a rare actor. When I was working with him, I could see his emotions in his eyes and his reactions to the change of the relationship between the two characters. He devoted a lot to our scenes. I was very happy to work with him."

Gong Li felt honored to be directed by Niki Caro. Says Gong, "Niki left us actors a very large space, allowing us to give full play to the characters we understood. She didn't give us too many instructions in the scene. After we fully expressed what we wanted, she'd give us some of her own thoughts or maybe some different ways of expressing the character. I was very happy to be able to work with her on this film."

The Emperor and Mulan's nemesis is Böri Khan, the embittered Rouran fighter from the North who will let nothing and no one get in the way of his determination to avenge the death of his father.

"They say a movie is only as good as its villain," says Jason Reed, "so we knew that our invader from the North had to be scary, intimidating and a real threat to the army and the emperor. You have to believe this character is capable of taking down an entire empire at the height of its power. We looked far and wide until we found Jason Scott Lee. He's a terrific actor, and 'Mulan' gave him an opportunity to really show his range and power."

Jason Scott Lee was thrilled to join the project and play a villain. "I love the choices that the villain can make, and I like the heaviness and the weight that those characters carry," says Lee. "It's fun to be singled out in black costuming. You really get a sense that he's from a different world. He's not of that China world that's been created."

For Lee, the physical training was another integral part of bringing the formidable villain to life on screen. "I came into this from a very comfortable zone, a family place," admits the actor. "Then the director wanted me all sinewy and sharp as a shark, so I started training. By the time we were done, I was down to the size I was in high school. It was a type of training that I had never gone through, even though I've been a physical actor in action films. It was probably the most challenging out of everything."

Lee was thrilled to have the chance to work with Gong Li. "I've always been an admirer," comments Lee. "I'm stoked to be playing across from her. I think she has this allure and essence about her. She also has this mystique from her iconic imagery and all the incredible work she's done in the past. It was awesome to trade dialogue with her and see her reaction."

As for Niki Caro, Lee was impressed by her forensic approach to direction. “Niki pushes for the fine details of what she’s looking for. She has an incredible eye and she’s focused. She’ll tweak you in so many ways and make your performance better.”

Tzi Ma plays the part of Mulan’s father, Zhou. Describing his character Ma says, “Zhou is a former military man who went to war and was injured. When we meet him, it is years later, and he has a family, a wife and two girls. One girl, Mulan, has a spirit that’s very different from anyone else. Zhou tries to contain her spirit as much as he knows how. But it’s impossible, because you cannot contain that kind of a spirit. It’s a gift. And Zhou understands that, so you see Zhou always trying to straddle this line of containment but not refinement. Even when he’s heartbroken when she goes in his place, I think in his heart of hearts he knows she will come back and bring greatness.”

Ma likens the tone of the film to an “amazing rollercoaster” ride—from family to war and back to family. “But I think it’s very spiritual too,” comments Ma. “It’s not just about all flash and action. Those things are important, and everyone will find them entertaining, but there’s a soul to ‘Mulan.’ It’s going to give the audience the opportunity to leave with that after viewing.”

Macau-born New Zealander Yoson An plays Honghui, the trainee soldier who begins the film as Mulan’s competitor but who becomes her friend.

Having the luxury of bringing a completely new character to the screen was a thrill for the actor. “One of the key things that Niki said about Honghui is that there’s a stillness in him,” says An. “There’s an inner confidence that just really shines out, without him really needing to exude that to show off or anything.”

Describing his character and his relationship with Mulan, An says, “Honghui is a young conscript, just like all the other conscripts, but he has a military background. So his martial arts skills, compared to the other boys, are pretty much through the roof. We’re first introduced to him during the conscription process when he has an altercation with Mulan.”

He adds, “I guess you could say that Mulan and Honghui start off on the wrong foot. But as they train together and live together in training camp, Honghui can see that there’s something different about Mulan, in comparison to the other boys. Because Commander Tung is very aware of what Mulan is doing all the time during the training process, Honghui feels like there must be something there that he’s not seeing. So, he makes amends, and it turns out that he’s right. There is something special about Mulan. She has this powerful inner chi about her.”

Commenting on his co-star Yifei Liu’s commitment, An praises, “Yifei’s amazing! She’s so focused all the time. She brings such a sense of innocence, yet maturity, to this version of Mulan, that it’s quite special. Just watching her work really wants to make you lift your game. She’s so lovely as well.”

Rounding out the cast are Ron Yuan, who plays Sergeant Qiang; Rosalind Chao, who portrays Mulan’s mother, Li; Nelson Lee, the Chancellor; Cheng Pei, the Matchmaker; Xana Tang, Mulan’s younger sister, Xiu; and Mulan’s fellow recruits played by Jun Yu (Cricket), Chen Tang (Yao), Doua Moua (Po) and Jimmy Wong (Ling).

The Making of "Mulan"

With the casting in place and preproduction behind them, the film began shooting in August 2018, in Auckland, New Zealand. According to director Niki Caro, "the energy on set was overwhelmingly positive." Continuing, she says, "People loved coming to work. When we first started shooting on day one in New Zealand, we began our shoot in the way I always would on a film shot in New Zealand, which is with a Maori blessing at dawn. It was beautiful but made even more beautiful by the fact that we also had a Chinese incense ceremony, where we gave our offerings to the ancestors. And from that moment on, through the rest of shooting the movie, I think we all did feel protected and very connected."

Niki Caro and her team made the decision early on to shoot as much as possible on location rather than in studio. "We wanted this movie to feel both epic and realistic, so there was no question that we would try to shoot as much as possible in camera and in real environments," explains Caro. "That meant we traveled across China to shoot real landscapes, trying to avoid green-screen–built environments."

Producer Jason Reed concurs: "A lot of movies now, especially big action movies, rely on green screen; they're done in computers. We felt this movie needed to have the authenticity that comes from shooting in a real location. From the very beginning, we designed 'Mulan' to shoot in epic locations throughout China and New Zealand to give the movie the scope and scale the material deserves."

The source material, "The Ballad of Mulan," has been retold in various forms over the centuries and is a blend of tales from different dynasties and locations set entirely in the north of China. The filmmakers were keen to reflect that history but also wanted to make sure the inspiring beauty and diversity of the Chinese landscape were well represented in the film, so Mulan's journey begins in the south and then takes her north to defend the Emperor.

Some 20 locations in China were used, including Hubei province in central China, the so-called Singing Sand Dunes in the Mingsha Shan Desert in Xinjiang province in the northwest, Zhangye Danxia National Geological Park in north central China, Flame Mountain in the north, Mazar Village, and Dunhuang and Jiuquan in Gansu province in the northwest, as well as studios in Zhejiang province in eastern China.

The immense size of China makes shooting the entire film there difficult, so the filmmakers chose to base part of the production in New Zealand. It was a creative and logistical decision. Because New Zealand is a much more compact country, the team could get to all the locations they needed—from mountains to deserts to bamboo forests—using less time and fewer resources than were needed in China.

New Zealand is a renowned filmmaking hub with first-class crews and a well-oiled infrastructure that has been used to acclaimed effect on international blockbusters such as "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy. "Much like China, New Zealand has a long history of making complicated, large-scale, epic movies," says producer Jason Reed. "They have the creative talent, the craftsman and the technical expertise to do what we needed for this movie; and it was a natural partnership between New Zealand and China. The production benefited from working with both."

“Movies are made everywhere, and we rely on all sorts of different locations to tell a story,” adds Caro. “While many iconic sequences and landscapes were shot in China, we found a number of critical locations in New Zealand, which augmented our story. One of those places, and the most critical, was the Ahuriri Valley in the South Island. We took 900 people to the Ahuriri Valley to stage an epic battle. It was incredible, like being on the back lot of a gigantic Italian movie from the ’50s.”

Filming in New Zealand took place at Kumeu Film Studios in Auckland and locations that included Ahuriri Valley, Mackenzie District, Poolburn, Rangipo, Hanua, Muriwai and Woodpile.

Caro was excited to film again in New Zealand. “It was so touching to me to go back to New Zealand to direct a movie, particularly a movie of this size,” she says. I felt like the crew of ‘Mulan’ just opened their arms to me, to Yifei, to the work, to the story. Our ethnically diverse crew, which included Chinese New Zealanders, took the storytelling very seriously. The New Zealand crew was deeply invested in the work that we did.”

At the end of filming the movie, the crew busted out in a haka dance. “This is a sign of maximum respect for New Zealanders, and I felt the full force of their love and respect in that moment. It was amazing and very humbling,” says Caro.

Photography & Production Design

Just as the locations had to be awe-inspiring, so did the design of the film. The filmmakers drew their inspirations for the design, makeup, weapons, clothing and architecture from a number of Chinese dynasties, including many elements from the Tang dynasty, which ruled China from 618 to 907.

To capture the overall look of the film through the camera lens, award-winning cinematographer Mandy Walker came on to head up the lighting and camera department and was Caro’s principal collaborator for the look and tone of the film from a photography perspective.

“My collaboration with cinematographer Mandy Walker has been one of the best of my career,” says Caro. “The visuals she has created for this movie are so rare and so special. This is an epic action-adventure movie, and the photography really delivers on that epic nature. It’s very visceral. It’s very real. It’s very raw and emotional. But it’s also very beautiful. And I think that’s what Mandy brings—a beauty that you do not often see in action movies.”

Walker spent time in China looking at the locations and historical sites. “I took a lot of photos, and that became part of our visual language, along with the previsualization and concept art,” says Walker. “But I always think about a film as gleaning little things from different influences, so the film becomes its own original entity.”

An important element of Walker’s China trip from a director-of-photography perspective was to assess the light so she could come back to New Zealand and work out a way that would create the atmosphere of China in New Zealand. “The way that we exposed the film helped with that, so it wasn’t too harsh and contrasting, because the light is quite soft in China,” comments Walker.

The film was shot on large-format Alexa 65 widescreen, and one of the lenses used was made from a glass lens used on David Lean’s masterpiece “Lawrence of Arabia,” which, along with the films of

Akira Kurosawa, was one of the references for Caro and Walker. Two lenses were used: a Petzval 85-mil portrait lens that was used predominantly for Yifei Liu, and a 58-mil Gauss lens that was used for all the moments of inner power and was made to Mandy Walker's specifications by Panavision out of found pieces of antique glass. "That lens has a magical chromatic aberration in it," says Caro. "On both lenses, the focus drops off around the edges of the frame so it really draws your eye to the center, but more importantly, it draws you emotionally into the performances."

"This film is special because Niki has a really original vision," says Walker. "She really wanted this film to be centered on Mulan and her discovering her inner power and strength. And so the way we approached it was how we were going to tell that story to the audience in a visual sense. One of the special things are the battle sequences. We didn't want them to be generic or bloodthirsty. We wanted to shoot them from Mulan's perspective, and she is an elegant, controlled, spiritual fighter. And she discovers her inner power, which is a very important part of the film. She has an almost balletic, elegant way of fighting, and we wanted to make that beautiful as well. We spent a lot of time in pre-production working out which lenses to use and how to move the camera around her so she was the center of the frame, because she is at the center of the film."

Caro and Walker were adamant that the film remain firmly on the reality side of the line between fantasy and reality. "We wanted the film to be beautiful and emotive but we didn't want to take it into any fantasy realm," says Walker. "So we shot on location for most of the movie, and we went down to the South Island for a lot of our battle sequences and bigger landscape sequences. We had the most amazing weather when we were down there. It snowed some days, and some days it was really hot, and other days it was raining. But we would try and incorporate into our schedule what scenes were right for what weather was coming up. So emotionally it worked as well. I think on this film we were really well prepared."

The rigorous approach also went into the collaborations with the other heads of department. "We made sure we were all on the same page with our color palette and textures," says Walker. "I would shoot tests where we would try different lighting on some of the set pieces so that they all tied in together and were telling the same story. We were very strict in our color palette and the way we would heighten things visually without taking them into fantasy sequences. So, the film has a beauty and a heightened reality that is historical but even more beautiful."

The film's ambitious scale made Walker's job just that little bit more challenging…and thrilling. "It was exciting rather than daunting," she says. "Because we had such huge crews and two or three units running, I had to think bigger and be more organized to ensure that we had a consistency in the look of the film. Controlling the light, having hundreds of extras in frame at once and working out how we were going to line them up and shoot them required real organization and preparation."

For the huge battle sequences, Caro and her department heads prepared meticulously with previsualization, including storyboards, drawings and photography, so that everyone was perfectly familiar with the placement of things. "It does take a special team to make a film like this," says Walker. "I had an amazing crew, and Niki runs her sets in a very calm and organized way. There's no yelling, we're very efficient, we listen to people, and we collaborate. It was always a very positive environment."

A very important member of the production team was production designer Grant Major, who has worked with Niki Caro since her first feature, "Memory & Desire," in 1997. "I love Grant's aesthetic,"

says Caro. “I love his eye, his taste. What I love the most is that his vision is huge—equal to mine. I knew when I tasked Grant with designing this film, he would give me even more than what I was hoping and dreaming of.”

Major worked closely with cinematographer Mandy Walker throughout the shoot. “There was an ongoing dialogue with Mandy about color and the way that the photography interacts with the art department,” he explains. “Essentially we were creating great compositions for her, as much as we could. We did several camera tests to check out textures and colors, particularly interiors at nighttime. Obviously, that meant designing so her lights could fit in easily and invisibly.”

An eye-popping set was the Emperor’s Throne Room. Grant first researched Chinese sources to find out more about these rooms. “There’s a very well-defined hierarchy in Chinese culture, with the emperor at the top, followed by the officials, usually from good families or people who have worked their way up through the civil service, who run the empire,” explains Grant. “Official business was conducted in the throne room and all the emperor’s dictates would be written down by scribes. The design of the room was copied from the two or three surviving buildings in China from that period and made bigger to reflect the scale of the Emperor’s power and to highlight the contrast between it and the surroundings. We consulted our Chinese experts all along the way.”

“Everything in the room, apart from the hanging lanterns, which were made in China, was made in our workshops by our team of craftspeople, including painters, furniture makers, joiners, carpenters and sculptors,” he continues. “These included the columns with their faux bronze bases, the dark, highly reflective flooring, the throne itself and all the areas around the majestic throne. The sculptors did a fabulous job in creating the dragons, which are larger versions of a historic, Tang-dynasty dragon shape that we found while doing research.”

The Emperor’s Throne Room was a favorite set of cinematographer Mandy Walker’s. “We tested the colors on the tiles, the reflection on the floor, the candles and the lanterns,” she explains. “We wanted the Emperor to be glowing on his throne. The size of the throne was really important, because when Mulan came in we wanted her to feel very small in this grand space.”

Niki Caro was taken aback by the room’s size. “The Throne Room in the Emperor’s palace was the biggest set I’ve ever seen,” says Caro. “Being in it gave all of us a sense of the grandeur and the importance of the Emperor, of his position in China and of Mulan’s passionate duty to save him.”

For Böri Khan’s yurt, which was built in Kumeu Film Studios, Major based the design on a real yurt from the 700 A.D. era in China but introduced several character details to the space, including the wolf motifs on the walls, representing Böri Khan’s leadership of the Wolf clan. The wolf motif is also present in the flags and banners that he and his army take into battle.

Like all the other sets, the yurt build needed to be properly functional, so Major designed the walls to be easily removed so that cameras and crew could get in and out, and an opening in the ceiling accommodated the lights.

Within the yurt are the spoils of war. Ornaments, artifacts and objects from the Middle East are scattered around the room, representing the wide variety of nationalities that used the Silk Road and from which Böri Khan had plundered during his travels.

“The yurt itself is fairly dark and moody but we brought in the treasure to add some bling to the whole scene,” says Major. “We introduced a lot of jewels and reflective objects which would stand out in contrast to the otherwise fairly dark environment of the yurt.”

Major also brought in shields to symbolize Böri Khan’s military standing. “These are part of the tribal weaponry that we see later on the battlefield,” says Major. “We wanted to highlight Böri Khan’s authoritative leadership.”

A key collaborator of the design team was weapons master Joe Dunckley. For a film with more than 30 cast members requiring multiple copies of every weapon and hundreds of extras, the challenge was real.

About 4,000 weapons were made in all. These were made out of a number of different materials: some were made of aluminum with urethane handles, some were soft versions for cast-on-cast fights. For Mulan’s father’s sword, which she takes into battle, two models were made. One was a sword for close-ups, with a bronze handle and steel blade etched with the words “Loyal Brave True,” the other a sword made of lightweight rubber with carbon fiber that was crafted to be easy to handle. “The steel sword weighed about four to five kilos, so it was too heavy for Yifei Liu to use for the fight sequences, whereas the copy weighed about three hundred grams, and she was really able to fling it around,” Dunckley says. “It also didn’t weigh her down when it was worn.”

Dunckley’s armory included shields for the infantry, used in the battle scenes to create organized defensive shield formations; spears, bows and arrows; double-edged Jian swords; the broader Dao sword and Kapinga dagger that Böri Khan wields; and the fearsome daggers used by Xianniang.

Producer Jason Reed for one was truly in awe of the work Grant Major and his team achieved. “There were so many hugely impressive sets,” he praises, “Sets that not many people have seen before on a movie. We have a palace under construction, we have the massive Throne Room, we have the Training Camp set, which was shot inside an incredible mountain range, and more. And all of it has been designed and built with such attention to period detail and with such artistic flair.”

Costumes & Makeup

Grant Major’s other collaborators were costume designer Bina Daigeler and makeup and hair designer Denise Kum. Describing their process of working together, Daigeler says, “We shared all the information. Grant Major had already done a lot of concept art, so we put it all together and began the development process. We were very happy because we had a very long and creative pre-production time. We all had a continuous and inspirational interchange.”

This is the second time Bina Daigeler has worked with director Niki Caro, after designing costumes for Caro’s most recent film, “The Zookeeper’s Wife.” Of the experience she says, “Niki was very clear about her ideas but she always wanted me to surprise her. It was a true collaboration. She always had an open mind because it’s all about teamwork for her, although she absolutely was our leader. I just loved working with her.”

Since the film is huge in scope and has an epic scale, Daigeler took the time to travel to China and delve into research. “The costumes, like every aspect of the film, were based on research, from talking to experts to visiting museums, to reference and art books,” says the costume designer. “Of

course the costumes for this film are much more elaborate than the costumes in the animated film, but I allowed a few inspirations from the animated film to sneak in, which 'Mulan' fans will recognize and hopefully enjoy."

Daigeler's first inspirations were the colors. "I thought, how I will use colors in this movie?" she recalls. "I wanted it to be fresh, positive and optimistic and really use bold colors. I brought in a lot of natural fabrics, and the team did an amazing dye job. The colors are yellows, reds, blues, and from Chinese history, I learned that every color has a symbolism; for example, yellow at that time was reserved for the Emperor."

For Niki Caro, the costumes helped to set the tone for the film. "On screen, you can see the authenticity in these garments. All the fabrics are so rich. There's such deep texture, and so much care went into the making of them that you feel like you're being immersed in another century."

The costumes for Xianniang, played by Gong Li, were among the most time-consuming and challenging. Daigeler and Caro wanted Xianniang to be clad in outfits that would symbolize her mystery and strength. Says Caro, "Xianniang is a powerful human weapon. Her costume recalls hawk details. Her weapons are on her body, and her eyes and her makeup are hooded like a hawk's in the form of a white mask. The light-colored clothing she wears comes from the idea of white in China being the color of death but also the color of purity."

Gong Li's costumes had to be striking, appropriate to the character and the narrative and, most important, comfortable to wear. The designers came up with outfits comprising a tunic in black hand-stitched leather worn over a screen-printed silk shirt with voluminous sleeves, a skirt made of shells, cinched with her signature belt made of bones, and topped off with a series of elaborate crowns.

Gong Li enjoyed collaborating with Daigeler. "The first samples were a little too soft, and we decided that, although there could be some softness, there needed to be elements that would symbolize Xianniang's strength. Putting on the costumes immediately made it much easier to get into character. I could feel Xianniang's power and her ambitions. I'm so grateful for Bina's creativity."

For the Emperor, played by Jet Li, Daigeler's imagination went to town. Niki Caro wanted to ensure that the Emperor's power and the wealth of his realm were evident from where he lives and what he wears. "Grant Major's design of the Emperor's Throne Room was just massive, and I tried to match that in the costumes he wears in those Throne Room scenes," says Daigeler.

What she created certainly fit the bill: the Emperor's yellow outfit is composed of layer upon layer of silk over voluminous pleated skirts with long sleeves, all hand-embroidered in Denmark. The effect makes him appear imposing, majestic and larger than life. Daigeler designed a more somber outfit for the battle scenes to highlight his physical strength and military skill. The black outfit features gold hand embroidery of dragons, the design motif that is repeated in his palace.

Daigeler traveled to Singapore to do the first fitting with Jet Li and brought his Throne Room costumes and his armor with her. "His daughters were there, and they approved of all of them, and were so thrilled to see him as the Emperor in 'Mulan'," comments Daigeler. "He really loved that."

Böri Khan's wardrobe required the most research. "Niki wanted to have him in attractive, strong, clear lines, and I wanted his costume to move and flow with him," explains Daigeler. "We used black leather with a lot of texture and volume. Underneath he wears chain mail and a belt adorned with the head of a wolf because he is part of the Wolf clan. Once I had Jason Scott Lee in the fitting, we just saw everything come together. In costume and with Denise Kum's makeup, it was suddenly, 'Wow, here he is, Böri Khan!'"

Adds Niki Caro, "Böri Khan and these shadow warriors are the only characters in the movie that are dressed in black all the time. Black is symbolic of danger, of terror, of coldness, of lack of love and empathy. What the costume designer brought to those blacks was deep texture, lots of leather and different types of leather work. They seem almost strangely organic and unreal."

But the costume Daigeler is most proud of is Mulan's matchmaker outfit. The lilac silk dress has bright pink trim and a belt decorated with embroidered images of a phoenix, a symbol of female energy. Underneath, she wears an undergarment embellished with a central embroidered magnolia, which Daigeler chose as Mulan's recurring motif.

"Yifei Liu suits the shape of the dress beautifully," says Daigeler. "She looks very feminine in the scene, and the dress really accentuates her female shape. That was important because it emphasizes the contrast with her look for the rest of the movie, where she's dressed as a man. The bright colors of purples and reds used for the dress are just a tiny nod to the animated film. All the village costumes are a combination of joyful colors. We dyed fabric, which are all natural linens, cottons and silks, in the workshop and we used some vintage pieces as well."

When she is disguised as a man in the army, Mulan wears her warrior tunic under her armor, which is the color red. "Red is an iconic color in China," informs director Niki Caro. "It's the color of fire but it also represents joy. And what an amazing inspiration for our hero, Mulan. The Imperial Army wears red, for all of those reasons. And, of course, Mulan doesn't stand out as a soldier in the Army. The whole point is that she blends in. But when she makes the decision to be true to herself and who she is, when she sheds her armor and loses her topknot, then the red of her tunic is exposed, as is her very strong female body. It's a beautiful and appropriate color for Mulan. It makes her glow and it reminds us how powerful she is."

The armor was a large part of Daigeler's work. For Yifei Liu, the Weta Workshop in New Zealand produced several types of armor, including beauty hero armor, the battle armor and the underwater armor, all made from different fabrics and different structures that were appropriate for the uses to which they were put.

For Daigeler, it was very important to have a lot of fittings with Yifei Liu's armor. "It was really important that she could move in her armor and in all her costumes, and that everything is just perfect for her, and that the costume is not in her way to do all the challenges that she has to do."

For the other characters, the designer introduced animal imagery into their armor, all based on research of what would have been used in the Tang dynasty. Commander Tung's armor, helmet and belt, for example, are adorned with images of turtles. For the Emperor, it was dragons and clouds adorning the green tunics. Of course, the primary concern was that the actors and extras would be able to move comfortably in the armor, which required numerous fitting and design tweaks.

The attention to detail and painstaking work were not lost on the actors. “The costume design is just amazing,” says Yoson An. “I go from wearing Honghui’s village’s clothing, into conscript clothing, into war armor. There’s a whole transformation throughout the progression of the story and how his costume changes. And with every piece of the costume, it feels like I’m wearing something that a traditional Chinese person would have worn long ago. It’s just incredible to see how it all came together.”

Here are some statistics that give an idea of the scale of Daigeler and her team’s task on “Mulan”: over 40 people worked on the costumes over three months, 2,062 costume items were sent to China, 1,104 headwear items were made, 250 hats were manufactured by Baorong in China, 1,114 complete outfits for extras were made, 590 complete costumes were made for the Imperial city, 100 complete costumes made for the Tulou village scenes, 281 sets of Chinese army armor were made for the Chinese Army and 730 items of Rouran armor were made, plus between three and five costumes were made for the 50 main actors, with over 1,000 costumes made in total.

Working closely with Bina Daigeler was makeup and hair designer Denise Kum. After thoroughly researching Chinese history, through contemporary painting, tapestries and sculptures, Kum created a look for the cast that would bring a sense of fun to the color palette.

Kum created several looks for Mulan, from teenager at the start of the film and her matchmaker look, to pretending to be a man in the army, through to her woman-warrior look and the final reveal of her real self.

Kum created a more fantastical look for the mysterious Xianniang. “We wanted to create something original, quite fresh,” she says. “What was really important to Gong Li was to make her very strong and iconic. It is quite a modern look with quite bold makeup inspired by the colors of hawk feathers. It also had to sit well with the incredible costumes and the crowns that she wears.”

Jason Scott Lee, who plays Böri Khan, needed makeup that would stand up to all the physical exertions the part required. “He was quite taken with Malian and Polynesian facial expressions, so we workshopped it together, and I designed scars that we could create on him with prosthetics. He looks like, as Niki Caro says, someone who everybody has tried to kill but nobody has succeeded.”

The opposite of Böri Khan’s look is that of Honghui, played by Yoson An. Kum went for a young, clean-shaven look that was both feminine and masculine. “Having him look unmasculine meant that Mulan would fit in better when she joins up and pretends to be male,” explains Kum. “The character also has a fragility to him that we tried to keep, and Yoson has great bone structure.”

Stunts & Training

For director Niki Caro, working on such an enormous canvas and creating the stunt sequences based in the Wushu style was a huge thrill. “Our stunt coordinators were brilliant and they worked very closely with kung fu masters to create the action in the film,” says Caro.

But what makes the film’s action sequences unique is its lead character. “The difference in this film is that the action is somewhat based in reality. Mulan is not a superhero. She’s a regular girl, and

yet she can do the most astonishing things with her body and her mind," Caro explains. "So, the stunt sequences are huge and the action is explosive and the story builds to an epic battle."

Adds producer Jason Reed, "When we started this process, we knew we wanted to have incredibly elaborate and complex stunt sequences. We wanted to have great epic battle sequences. Our references were the great films of Akira Kurosawa."

The actors had to work hard to prepare for these physically demanding battle scenes. Says Reed, "With a seventy-five-day schedule, to get these soldiers out on the battlefield swinging weapons, climbing towers and more, they needed to really dig in. So our squad was in boot camp for months doing specialty weight training and a lot of stunt training."

Yoson An, who plays conscripted soldier Honghui, concurs, adding, "We did martial arts training for the scenes in the great battlefield for about three months. We trained with this amazing trainer who has an amazing military background in Special Forces in Serbia. Training with him was phenomenal. It's exactly what we needed to get ourselves into shape for this film."

For Jason Scott Lee, training ran the gamut from physical conditioning to fight choreography to sword work with the Chinese fight team. "We did some very complicated sword-work stuff, which was very hard to get around. It was a type of Wushu style which is very difficult to do, but Jet Li and Donnie Yen made it look easy!" comments Lee.

For Yifei Liu, Caro had some pointers for the trainers in terms of how she wanted Mulan to appear. "It was so important to me that she wasn't a wispy, pretty girl that somehow managed to look like a guy," says the director. "She had to be credible as a man in a man's army."

Explaining the regimen that kept her in the gym for months before production, Liu says, "On some projects you only train with a sword or only martial arts. But this time they really wanted to get my body prepared overall, so I did basic physical training. It was really helpful but tough. Every day in the morning, the first thing I did was work out two hours. And then two hours again for martial arts."

To achieve the extraordinary battle scenes, the filmmakers brought in specialist stunt teams from China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, New Zealand and Australia to work alongside New Zealand stunt coordinator Ben Cooke. With fight scenes that involved several lead actors and an army of 100 extras, Cooke had his work cut out for him.

The key was rehearsing. Cooke explains: "We brought in a stunt team to work out the choreography, and once we finalized how the actors were going to move around each other, we brought them in to train with the cast trainer Bojan Mladenovic, who developed their strength and conditioning and also collaboration and team building. The training consists of basic handling of weapons all the way through to rolling, falling, running, jumping or on wires. Most of our time was spent working with Yifei Liu because, as Mulan, she has the most to do. But everyone worked on their flexibility, strength, agility and stamina. And that included all the extras as well as the leads because we wanted it to be as safe as possible so everyone had a good day and everyone went home in one piece!"

It was the first time Cooke collaborated with Niki Caro, and he was impressed. "Niki definitely sees the action through different eyes," he says. "She's really in tune with character development and

how we use the action to drive the story. It's not just about doing elaborate stunts for the sake of it; there has to be a reason, and it has to be in the service of the development of the character or the story. She has a very artistic eye, too, and these things made the work much better."

The Music of Mulan

"Mulan" marks the second time composer Harry Gregson-Williams has worked with director Niki Caro, having scored her film "The Zookeeper's Wife," which was released in 2017. Gregson-Williams was inspired to take on the project, not only because he had a great experience working with Caro previously, but because of the original, animated "Mulan" as well. "I loved that film," the composer states. "I've got children who were really into 'Mulan' when it first came out, so I remembered the story very well. I also loved the Jerry Goldsmith score, so it's like following in his footsteps. I'm a great admirer of his. He's one of the greats as far as I'm concerned."

When Gregson-Williams sat down with the director, he found out how she envisioned the music would underpin the story. "Niki always wanted this to be an emotional tale," says the composer, "and for the music and the story to be told from the point of view of Mulan."

He continues, "If ever I was confused or unsure about what I should be doing, I'd look into Mulan's eyes on the screen and see what it was that was going through her mind. So, the score is really driven from her point of view, as is the film. Her emotional arc and her journey is what the music tracks."

Gregson-Williams comments that collaborating with Niki Caro is "a composer's dream because she's really into music, and she knows the power of music, especially as a storytelling tool."

A welcome challenge for the composer was writing music to underscore a film that was grounded in Chinese legend and history. "These are the things that we love and that we look forward to as composers—the challenges of meeting an opportunity like this head on," says Gregson-Williams. "And the idea for the music was that it would be a fully orchestral score that had an additional layer of featured Chinese instruments woven into its DNA. Ancestry and heritage are both really important to the story, so I immersed myself in that world and sought out specific musicians who could contribute using their knowledge of Chinese music."

Many Chinese instruments were used in scoring "Mulan": the guzheng, which is a beautifully emotive plucked instrument, was used to accompany some of the more tender moments; a range of Chinese flutes and a variety of other ethnic woodwind instruments were used as lead instruments, particularly accompanying scenes involving Mulan herself; a pipa, which is a little like a harp and can be plucked quite aggressively, was used to great effect in some of the action sequences; a Chinese violin called an erhu, a very beautiful, evocative instrument, was used around the Xianniang character and gave her a very mystical quality; and a huge variety of percussion instruments, gongs, bells and cymbals were also featured throughout the score.

Composing a score using unusual instruments requires a different approach, as Gregson-Williams explains: "When writing for instruments that I don't normally use, I first of all have to find out what their range is, so I'll listen to music. It's not necessarily trying to imitate that music but just hearing how the blend of that instrument and more Western instruments will work."

He adds, “At the heart of the score is a full-bodied symphony orchestra and a big choir. But on the periphery, we have a lot of Chinese colors.”

Gregson-Williams points out that this reimagining of “Mulan” is not a musical like the animated version. “We all remember that the animated movie is a musical,” says the composer. “The characters did stop and sing narrative songs. That’s not what we’re doing here, but there are a couple of moments in the film where people who know the first movie will be hopefully tickled, because they’ll hear and recognize music in a scene.”

He adds, “It’s a bit more subtle approach, and there are a couple of moments where we pushed that as a little reminder to anybody who might know the first film. Now, if you don’t know those songs from the first film, you’ll hear a melody that seems quite fitting. So that was Niki’s idea.”

As a nod to the original movie and its fans, “Mulan” does showcase one very special song from the animated feature. Director Niki Caro explains, “The score by Harry Gregson-Williams is every bit as epic and emotional and thrilling as the movie itself. However, it was really important to me to honor the animation by bringing in the most revered song—‘Reflection.’” Written by Matthew Wilder and David Zippel, the brand-new recording of “Reflection” is performed by GRAMMY® Award–winning music superstar Christina Aguilera and produced by Harry Gregson-Williams.

Yifei Liu, who is also a singer, recorded “Reflection” in Mandarin as well. The Mandarin version of the song was produced by Matthew Wilder, who originally co-wrote and produced the song for the animated film.

And to make “Mulan” even more special, “Loyal Brave True” is a new original song written especially for the film by Jamie Hartman, Harry Gregson-Williams, Rosi Golan and Billy Crabtree, and produced by Jamie Hartman. Christina Aguilera recorded the new song in both English and Spanish.

“Loyal Brave True” was written from the perspective of Mulan as she realizes her journey from a young girl, masking her identity, to a true warrior. These three virtues (loyal, brave, true) are engraved on Mulan’s sword and serve as a constant reminder of what she has been hiding from the world.

“Musically, the song was conceived to be a direct extension of the film’s score,” comments Gregson-Williams, “utilizing Mulan’s theme and evolving from there to grow in scope and strength, thus mirroring Mulan’s own story. The lyrics reflect how she questions her own integrity and her place in the world until she finds the courage to be true to herself as a daughter, a warrior and a woman.”

Epic Adventure Awaits…

With its incredible locations, spectacular sets, thrilling action, compelling characters and gripping story about a young woman’s discovery of her true self, Caro and her collaborators hope the film will have a wide appeal beyond the fans of the animated feature, spanning nationalities, demographics and generations.

“I love everything about this movie,” producer Jason Reed enthuses. “I can’t wait for people to see it. What I’m most excited about is for them to see how we’ve reinterpreted and brought to life things that they remember and love from the animated movie. It’s not the same film but it’s a variation on a theme. And that’s really fun.”

Producer Chris Bender comments, “This is not a live-action shot-by-shot version of something that audiences have already seen. Mulan is not your average heroine; she’s a warrior. While you may think you know her story, you’ve never seen it look or be told like this before.”

Bender’s fellow producer Jake Weiner adds, “Mulan should be relatable to anyone, male or female, who feels like they aren’t able to fully be themselves. How do you honor tradition and your family while also being true to yourself when those things are at odds? It’s a timeless conflict.”

Chris Bender caps their remarks, saying, “Audiences shouldn’t expect talking animals or singing soldiers, but instead they will experience an epic adventure and a Disney heroine unlike any that they’ve seen before!”

For Bill Kong, the live-action “Mulan” will bring another perspective to audiences. “Mulan is a legendary figure to Chinese men and women, boys and girls,” says the executive producer. “She represents many great Chinese values, like loyalty and honoring family. It will be great to see these values being extended to the world.”

Celebrated Chinese actress Gong Li agrees. “This film is not just for kids. It has a lot of elements, a lot of human nature and something waiting for us to explore, so it’s not just a simple story. It exhibits the power of people, the relationship between people and a lot of the vicissitudes of life. This story is not simply about Mulan joining the army, but about humanity, about relationships among people, about commitment, courage and Chinese filial piety and loyalty—the film contains a lot of meaningful things.”

Yifei Liu, who plays the iconic heroine, comments, “If there’s some moment in the movie that touches audiences, even for some reason they don’t know, I will think that we did something good. And I hope that they open up and dream well about themselves.”

Director Niki Caro says it is difficult to pick just one aspect of making “Mulan” that she is most proud of, but says she is “proud of the performances, the look of the film and the action of the film, and that the emotional journey is equal to the epic action-adventure of the movie.”

Caro is excited for audiences to experience the reimagined story in a very real way. “Mulan’s journey of a girl who goes to war and saves an empire is so visceral and real that I’m most excited for audiences to experience it in completely immersive live-action.”

ABOUT THE CAST

YIFEI LIU (Mulan) has been one of China’s most popular actresses since her TV debut in the early 2000s. She made her English-language film debut in 2008 alongside Jackie Chan and Jet Li in “The Forbidden Kingdom.”

She can also be seen in “Outcast,” opposite Nicolas Cage; in Bille August’s period romance “The Chinese Widow,” opposite Emile Hirsch; and in China’s romantic-fantasy film “Once Upon a Time,” produced by Alibaba Pictures.

Martial arts movie icon **DONNIE YEN (Commander Tung)** exploded onto the Hong Kong cinema scene when he starred in director Yuen Woo-ping’s martial arts comedy “Drunken Tai Chi.” Yen, the son of legendary Boston-based kung fu instructor Bow Sim-mark, was tailor-made for the jade screen, having trained under his mother since early childhood.

As a naturally rebellious youth, the teenaged Yen went on to study a wide variety of martial arts. From an early age, he was driven to seek the best knowledge that both East and West had to offer. This background allowed him a unique perspective and skill set when it came time for him to make his mark on world cinema.

Yen’s debut film immediately established him as a viable leading man, and he has remained a major figure in Chinese action cinema to this day.

Born in Canton but raised in Boston, Yen has always been unique among martial arts stars in that his persona balances both the martial virtues of his mother and the scholarly and musical ones of his father, Klysler. Aside from his training in the various combative systems, Yen is also a gifted pianist, and critics have noted the musical phrasing and tempo of his performances and action set pieces.

Yen went on to star in a series of acclaimed contemporary action dramas in which he began to pioneer his special blend of rapid-fire kicking, Western boxing and grappling moves. Films like “In the Line of Duty 4” and “Tiger Cage 1 & 2” saw the start of Yen’s ascent as an influential action filmmaker, equally adept in front of and behind the camera.

The return of period kung fu films to Hong Kong cinema allowed Yen to develop another aspect of his screen persona. He displayed superlative classical Chinese martial arts moves in director/producer Tsui Hark’s “Once Upon a Time in China 2” and “Dragon Inn.” These films brought Yen his first real attention as a thespian; he was nominated in the best supporting actor category at the Hong Kong Film Awards.

Yen’s talents took him beyond acting and action choreography, and he made his directorial debut with “Legend of the Wolf,” a stylish period action drama. Yen followed this with a very different directorial venture, “Ballistic Kiss,” an urban thriller that has become a cult classic.

The western market got its first sight of this rising star from the East when Yen’s film “Iron Monkey” received a wide U.S. theatrical release. In the wake of this success, Yen relocated to Hollywood, working on several high-profile international hits. He both acted in and action- directed “Highlander: Endgame” and “Blade II,” and co-starred with Jackie Chan in “Shanghai Knights.”

Despite the success of these projects, Yen still felt that his talents and vision were under-utilized in Hollywood. His ambition was to break new ground in martial arts cinema. He returned to Hong Kong, where his confidence was borne out, as this shift of focus took his career to a whole new level.

Yen co-starred in director Zhang Yimou's epic wuxia master work "Hero." Yen's duel with Jet Li brought his performance to the emerging Mainland Chinese theatrical audience and paved the way for him to become the country's biggest action star. The film received a wide U.S. theatrical release from Miramax and remains one of the most successful foreign-language titles ever distributed in the America market.

The first stage in Yen's plan to revitalize Hong Kong martial arts cinema saw him action-direct "The Twins Effect." His work won him best choreography at the Hong Kong Film Awards, and his subsequent films have seen him win this same category at virtually every major Asian awards ceremony.

Yen has proven himself an extraordinarily versatile filmmaker, crafting the best cinematic interpretation of mixed martial arts fighting in hits like "SPL: Kill Zone" and "Flash Point," and recreating classic Chinese kung fu forms in such fan favorites as "Lost Bladesman," "14 Blades" and "Bodyguards and Assassins."

Away from the cameras, Yen entered into the most rewarding partnership of his life when he married former beauty queen Cissy Wang. The couple now has two children, a girl and a boy, Jasmine and James.

Yen's own life journey seems to have led inevitably to his greatest success, the hugely popular and acclaimed "Ip Man." By the time this project came around, Yen was himself a happy family man with a background as both a scholar and a martial artist, just like the patriarch of the Wing Chun kung fu clan he played on screen. Yen became synonymous with the title character, and the movie is perceived as being the most influential kung fu film of its decade. "Ip Man" took Yen's leading-man status to new heights, and its sequel was even more successful.

Yen partnered with director Peter Chan to make "Wu Xia" (aka "Dragon"), a dark, elegant period martial arts murder mystery. The film premiered to great acclaim at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival, and subsequently received a North American theatrical release from The Weinstein Company.

Yen went on to play the title character in "The Monkey King," a hugely popular reimagining of the Chinese classic. Starring opposite screen legend Chow Yun-fat, Yen also choreographed the action for the film, which smashed box-office records in Mainland China. Yen was subsequently called on to revisit the greatest worldwide franchise in the history of Asian action cinema—"Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon 2: The Green Destiny." The film was shot primarily on location in New Zealand, with Yen in the lead role. The world-class creative team included legendary kung fu film director Yuen Woo-ping, acclaimed Hollywood filmmakers Peter Berg and Morten Tyldum (as producers), "X-Men" series director of photography Tom Sigel, as well as the Oscar®-winning production, costume and FX designers from the "Lord of the Rings" and "Hobbit" film series.

In 2015 Yen was seen in "Ip Man 3." This was followed in 2019 with "Ip Man 4." He also began developing a series of films for his own companies, Super Hero Films and Bullet Films, including the epic crime drama "Dragon City."

Recently Yen co-starred in two box-office hits: "Rogue One: A Star Wars Story" from the "Star Wars" franchise and "XXX" with Vin Diesel, for which he received rave reviews.

With his groundbreaking work on and off camera, Donnie Yen continues to entertain worldwide audiences with the range and depth of his talents.

GONG LI (Xianniang) has been called “the greatest actress in China” and has been credited with helping to bring Chinese cinema to the world.

She achieved international prominence through her many collaborations with acclaimed Chinese director Zhang Yimou. Gong Li won the Volpi Cup for Best Actress at the Venice International Film Festival for her performance in his 1992 film, “The Story of Qiu Ju.”

Gong Li has won numerous other accolades for her work, including the New York Film Critics Circle Award for best supporting actress in “Farewell My Concubine” (1993) and the National Board of Review Award for best supporting actress in “Memoirs of a Geisha” (2005). She has also won two Golden Rooster Awards, three Hundred Flowers Awards, one Hong Kong Film Award and a Cannes Festival trophy.

Gong Li’s notable film appearances include starring in Zhang Yimou’s “Ju Dou” (1990), “Raise the Red Lantern” (1991) and “Curse of the Golden Flower” (2006); Wong Kar-wai’s “2046” (2004); Rob Marshall’s “Memoirs of a Geisha” (2005); Michael Mann’s “Miami Vice” (2006); Peter Webber’s “Hannibal Rising” (2007); and Mikael Hafstrom’s “Shanghai” (2010).

Her recent credits include Zhang Yimou’s “Coming Home” (2014), Cheang Pou-soi’s “The Monkey King 2” (2016), Peter Chan’s “Leap” (2020) and Lou Ye’s “Saturday Fiction,” which premiered at the Venice and Toronto International Film Festivals in 2019.

Gong Li was the recent recipient of Kering’s prestigious Women in Motion Award at the Cannes Film Festival in 2019.

Born in Beijing, **JET LI (Emperor)** began studying the art of wushu (the general Chinese term for martial arts) at the age of 8. After three years of extensive training, Li won his first national championship for the Beijing Wushu Team. Jet Li’s celebrity in China was so great that the government selected him to represent the country in over 45 countries by performing martial arts at various state functions. The most famous, in terms of history, was his 1974 performance on the lawn of the White House for President Richard Nixon, after he had just reopened American diplomatic relations with China. For the next five years, Li remained the All-Around National Wushu Champion of China.

Shortly after retiring from the sport at the age of 17, Li was offered many starring roles and subsequently began his film career with director Chang Hsin Yen for “Shaolin Temple.” The success of “Shaolin Temple” propelled Li from a mere martial arts master to a full-fledged Chinese movie star and celebrity almost overnight. His star shone so brightly that almost any picture with his name attached became an instant success. “Kids from Shaolin” and “Martial Arts of Shaolin,” Li’s second and third films respectively, also enjoyed box-office success. Li was to complete 25 successful Asian films before crossing over to America.

Since his first English-language film appearance as the villain in Warner Bros.' "Lethal Weapon 4," opposite Mel Gibson, Li has appeared in films like Warner Bros.' "Romeo Must Die," Sony's "The One," Fox's "Kiss of the Dragon" and "Hero."

After "Hero," Li continued with projects such as Warner Bros.' "Cradle 2 the Grave" and Universal's "Unleashed," co-starring Morgan Freeman and Bob Hoskins. In 2005 Li began work on what he said was the culmination of his lifelong experience with martial arts: "Fearless," directed by Ronny Yu, which received considerable box-office and critical success both in Asia and around the world, including a best actor award for Li from the Hong Kong Film Critics Association.

Since the release of "Fearless," Li has completed work on "War" (aka "Rogue"), a Lionsgate release; the Chinese-language film "Tou Ming Zhuang" (known in English as "The Warlords") with Andy Lau and Takeshi Kaneshiro; and co-starred in "Expendables" (1, 2 & 3) for Lionsgate.

Li is extending his fame to charitable causes. Already a Red Cross ambassador, Li recently spearheaded and founded the Red Cross Society of China Jet Li One Foundation Project (One Foundation), a foundation whose goal is to provide counseling to victims of natural disasters and to help young people coping with mental health and psychological issues.

The One Foundation believes that "1 person + 1 yuan +1 month = 1 big family." Says Li, "If each person donates at least one yuan each month, our individual donations will be transformed into a much greater fund. When we combine our charitable strength, we can make sure that the most vulnerable members of our global family will receive the help they need right away." With the vision of "doing my best for the common good," One Foundation is committed to becoming the founder of the power of public good. By the end of 2018, the One Foundation had received over 1.929 billion yuan in donations and materials from the public, with the total number of donations exceeding 2.867 billion. By joining more than 23,932 public welfare partners, One Foundation has helped 13 million people to get out of trouble and live a more dignified life.

JASON SCOTT LEE (Böri Khan) was most recently seen as Hades Dai in "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: Sword of Destiny" for director Woo-ping Yuen, which aired on Netflix in 2016.

Lee began his acting career with small roles in "Born in East L.A." (1987) and "Back to the Future Part II" (1989). But he burst onto the scene when he played his first leading role portraying Bruce Lee in the biopic "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story." Lee continued to train in Bruce Lee's martial art, Jeet Kune, and has since become a certified instructor under former Bruce Lee student Jerry Poteet.

Following this, Lee played leading roles in other films such as "Map of the Human Heart" and "Rapa Nui." Lee then starred as Mowgli in the 1994 Disney live-action adaptation of Rudyard Kipling's "The Jungle Book." Lee went on to co-star with Kurt Russell in director Paul W.S. Anderson's film "Soldier." He then followed this up by playing Aladdin in the miniseries "Arabian Nights."

Lee performed the voice-over for the role of David Kawena in the Disney animated film "Lilo & Stitch," and also for the film's sequel. Lee's credits continued with films such as "Dracula II: Ascension," "Timecop 2: The Berlin Decision," the sequel to the original 1994 film starring Jean-Claude Van Damme, and "The Prophecy: Forsaken." In 2007, Lee also gave a funny turn as Siu-Foo

in the ping-pong comedy “Balls of Fury,” starring Christopher Walken. He also starred opposite Jeff Bridges in “Seventh Son” for Legendary Pictures as the mystic warrior Urag.

Lee is among the actors, producers and directors interviewed in the documentary “The Slanted Screen,” directed by Jeff Adachi, about the representation of Asian and Asian American men in Hollywood.

Lee made his operatic debut in the non-singing role of Pasha Selim in Hawaii Opera Theatre’s production of Mozart’s “Abduction from the Seraglio” at the Blaisdell Concert Hall in Honolulu, Hawaii, and starred as the King for the Sydney Opera House’s production of “The King and I” in Australia. He then went on to play the role on London’s West End opposite Elaine Paige.

YOSON AN (Honghui) is a New Zealand actor of Chinese descent. Beginning his acting career in 2012, he has rapidly added an impressive collection of credits to his résumé, having appeared in the international feature films “The Meg,” “Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: Sword of Destiny” and “Mortal Engines,” as well as having lead roles in New Zealand local film “Mega Time Squad” and cult classic “Ghost Bride.”

Television highlights include a supporting role in the HBO Asia miniseries “Grace”; costarring in SBS TV’s crime thriller “Dead Lucky” with Rachel Griffiths; Warner Bros. New Zealand’s comedy-thriller “Fresh Eggs”; and now the BBC’s “The Luminaries,” written by award-winning author Eleanor Catton.

Multilingual, An is fluent in Cantonese and Mandarin as well as English and is a skilled martial artist. He holds a black belt in karate and has also, in the past, practiced kick-boxing, ninjutsu, power lifting and rock climbing.

TZI MA (ZHOU) was born in Hong Kong to Chinese parents, Ching Shan and Wan Chi Wong Ma. He immigrated to the United States at a young age. Together with four of his siblings—Kwan, Suk Ying, Susan and Miu Ying—and brother-in-law Willie, he worked in a family-owned restaurant on Staten Island, New York, where he still has elementary school friends he’s in touch with.

One of the most prolific and versatile actors working today, Tzi Ma has worked alongside many of the biggest names in Hollywood. He honed his craft in many Off-Broadway and regional theaters shows, and worked with acclaimed playwright David Henry Hwang on his first two plays, “FOB” and “The Dance and the Railroad” (a play specifically written for Ma), at the Public Theater, and with Eric Overmyer on “In Perpetuity Throughout the Universe” (also specifically written for Ma) at the Hudson Guild and Baltimore Center Stage, to name a few.

His first acting role on the screen was in Ulli Lommel’s cult jet-set film “Cocaine Cowboys,” alongside Jack Palance and Andy Warhol in 1978. The claim to fame for that film was that the Nassau County police department at Montauk Point mistook them for real cocaine dealers, confiscated many duffel bags of powdered sugar and production cash, and held up production for several days.

Most recently, Ma starred in the Sundance breakout hit "The Farewell," opposite Awkwafina. His upcoming films include playing the protagonist in Alan Yang's Netflix feature "Tigertail" and a supporting role in Aimee Long's "A Shot Through the Wall."

In 2017, Ma played the male lead in the award-winning feature "Meditation Park," for which he was nominated for best actor at the 2018 Canadian Screen Awards. He also played the pivotal role of General Shang in Denis Villeneuve's "Arrival," a film with Amy Adams that was both critically acclaimed and a box-office success. From his role as Hinh, a deadly-efficient assassin and nationalist triple-agent masquerading as Michael Caine's assistant, in "The Quiet American" to his hilarious, lit-cigarette-swallowing take on the General in Joel and Ethan Coen's "The Ladykillers," Ma always delivers the unexpected. Over the years, he has amassed a distinguished body of work and has come to be a household face.

Audiences will always remember Ma's Counsel/Ambassador Han from "Rush Hour" and "Rush Hour 3." His other favorite major film credits include "Million Dollar Arm," "Dante's Peak," "Akeelah and the Bee," "Chain Reaction" and "Rapid Fire."

Ma is also a firm believer in supporting indie films, particularly involving Asian Canadian or Asian American writers, directors and producers. These films include "Golden Gate," written by David Henry Hwang; "Catfish in Black Bean Sauce" by writer/director Chi Muoi Lo; "Red Doors" by writer/director Georgia Lee; "Formosa Betrayed," produced by Will Tiao; "#1 Serial Killer" by writer/director Stanley Yung; "Pali Road" by writer/director/producer Jonathan Lim; and "Mike, Mike Tan" by writer/director Aimee Long.

Notable recurring roles on television include the Dragon in ABC's "Once Upon a Time"; General Onoda in Amazon's "The Man in the High Castle"; Tao in AMC's "Hell on Wheels"; President Lu Chi Jang in HBO's "Veep"; Mr. Young in Netflix's "Wu Assassins"; Frank/Zen Master in USA's "Satisfaction"; Ambassador Lu in ABC's "Commander in Chief"; Cheng Zhi in Fox's "24" and "24: Live Another Day"; Dr. Henry Lu in CBS's "City of Angels"; Det. Harold Ng in ABC's "NYPD Blue"; Lee Hei in CBS's "Martial Law"; and as Bah in Fox's animated series "American Dad!"

RON YUAN (Qiang) can be seen on Freeform's "Siren" as the lead antagonist and has been a series regular on CBS's "Golden Boy" and Netflix's "Marco Polo." He is one of the most sought-after character actors, with over two decades of experience, and is an excellent martial artist. Other significant credits include Gavin O'Connor's "The Accountant," "Sons of Anarchy," "Murder in the First" and the lead in the HBO pilot "All Signs of Death."

Yuan has also established a name for himself behind the camera. Recently, he directed the next installment of Lionsgate's popular franchise "Step Up" for China, co-produced by Shanghai Infinity Pictures Group/CMC. He has designed and directed the action sequences for hits such as Simon West's "Wild Card," starring Jason Statham; "Bad Country," starring Willem Dafoe and Matt Dillon; and popular Chinese franchise "Black & White: The Dawn of Justice," starring Mark Chao.

Yuan starred, produced and directed action on "The Girl from the Naked Eye," as well as consulted on action edits for "Blood and Bone" and "Ella Enchanted."

Writer and director **NIKI CARO (Director)** is one of the most successful filmmakers to emerge from New Zealand in recent years.

After completing a BFA at Elam School of Fine Arts in Auckland and a Postgraduate Diploma in Film from Swinburne in Melbourne, Caro directed a number of highly acclaimed short films, including "Sure to Rise," which screened in competition at Cannes in 1994, and "Footage," which was an Official Selection at the Venice Film Festival in 1996.

Caro's first feature, "Memory & Desire" (1997), was in the lineup at the Cannes Film Festival and won a Special Jury Prize at the New Zealand Film Awards. Her second feature film, "Whale Rider," won 27 international awards, including audience awards at prestigious international film festivals such as Toronto, Sundance, Rotterdam, San Francisco, Seattle and Maui. The film earned an Academy Award® nomination for Keisha Castle-Hughes, then the youngest person ever to be nominated in the best actress category.

Following the international success of "Whale Rider," Caro directed "North Country," starring Charlize Theron, Frances McDormand, Sissy Spacek and Woody Harrelson. Theron and McDormand were nominated for best actress and best supporting actress respectively at the 2005 Academy Awards®, Golden Globe® Awards, BAFTAs, Satellite Awards and Screen Actors Guild Awards®.

Caro's more recent feature-length films include "A Heavenly Vintage," "McFarland, USA," starring Kevin Costner, and "The Zookeeper's Wife," starring Jessica Chastain.

In her first foray into American television, Caro helmed the movie pilot for Netflix's "Anne with an 'E,'" a bold and inspired new vision of the "Anne of Green Gables" story, for which she won her first DGA Award. "Anne with an 'E'" recently completed its third and final season.

Next up for Caro is directing "Daisy Jones & the Six," a miniseries from Amazon that follows a rock band trying to make it big in the L.A. music scene in the 1970s.

RICK JAFFA (Screenplay by) has collaborated with his wife and partner, Amanda Silver, for more than 25 years. They are currently writing and producing the TV series "Circe," based on the best-selling book by Madeline Miller, set to stream on HBO Max in spring of 2021. "Avatar 2" and "Avatar 3," the scripts they co-wrote with James Cameron for the much-anticipated sequels to "Avatar," the second-highest-grossing film of all time, are in production and scheduled for release in 2021 and 2023.

In 2015, they wrote the worldwide blockbuster "Jurassic World," which has grossed more than $1.6 billion worldwide, making it the sixth-highest-grossing film of all time. In 2011, the duo wrote and produced the hit "Rise of the Planet of the Apes," which earned an Oscar® nomination for its groundbreaking visual effects and successfully rebooted the "Planet of the Apes" franchise. In 2014, they co-wrote and produced the sequel, "Dawn of the Planet of the Apes," and the third installment, "War for the Planet of the Apes," was released in 2017.

A native of DeSoto, Texas, Jaffa graduated from Southern Methodist University with a degree in history and political science. He later earned his MBA at the University of Southern California. In

1981, Jaffa began his entertainment career in the mail room of the William Morris Agency. He became the executive assistant to legendary agent Stan Kamen, who was then head of the motion-picture department. Later, as an agent, Jaffa represented writers and directors, packaging films as diverse as 1987's "RoboCop" and 1985's "The Trip to Bountiful."

Jaffa began collaboration with Silver as an executive producer on "The Hand That Rocks the Cradle," which she scripted. They then co-wrote "Eye for an Eye" and "The Relic."

AMANDA SILVER (Screenplay by) has teamed with her husband, Rick Jaffa, on a number of successful film projects. They are currently writing and producing the TV series "Circe," based on the best-selling book by Madeline Miller, set to stream on HBO Max in spring of 2021. "Avatar 2" and "Avatar 3," the scripts they co-wrote with James Cameron for the much-anticipated sequels to "Avatar," the second-highest-grossing film of all time, are in production and scheduled for release in 2021 and 2023.

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Silver grew up in New York City and received her B.A. in history from Yale University before moving to Los Angeles. She was an executive assistant at TriStar and Paramount Pictures before enrolling in film school at the University of Southern California, where she earned an MFA in screenwriting.

Silver's thesis script was the thriller "The Hand That Rocks the Cradle," which went on to be a hit in 1992 and began her collaboration with Jaffa, who executive produced the film. She followed the next year with a CableACE Award–winning episode of "Fallen Angels," directed by Alfonso Cuarón. Silver and Jaffa have since co-written such films as "Eye for an Eye" and "The Relic."

LAUREN HYNEK & ELIZABETH MARTIN (Screenplay by) started writing their first plays at the age of about 7. Lauren Hynek fell in love with the magic of movies while visiting her dad (visual effects supervisor Joel Hynek) on the set of "Predator" as a little kid. Elizabeth Martin spent her tween years writing fan-fiction episodes of "Star Trek: The Next Generation."

In high school, the two joined forces while working at the same Shakespeare theater in the summers. They continued to work in classical theater together after college, producing plays on shoestring budgets and getting paid out of a passed hat.

However, frustrated with the limited roles for women in Shakespeare's work, they started to dream of creating their own stories—ones that featured strong women that their little-girl selves could look up to. They let their imaginations run to tales that couldn't be tackled on the stage—they demanded the big screen. Hynek and Martin spent a few years teaching themselves how to write

and format a screenplay. Along the way to writing "Mulan," the duo won a handful of writing contests, wrote a Lifetime movie, "Christmas Perfection," and were hired to adapt a New York Times best-seller into an hour-long drama series for Alcon Entertainment.

Currently, they're working on a biopic about computer pioneer Grace Hopper for Middleton Media as well as rewriting an action flick for a trio of companies. In their spare time, they strive to make the world a more equal place as co-chairs of the Committee of Women Writers at the WGAW.

CHRIS BENDER, p.g.a. (Producer) founded Good Fear Content in 2016 with Jake Weiner. The company produces clutter-busting media across theatrical, TV and emerging digital platforms with a focus on nurturing and establishing new voices aspiring to be generation-defining talent.

Under the company's banner, Bender's most recent release was as producer on David Robert Mitchell's "Under the Silver Lake" with Oscar® nominee Andrew Garfield, Riley Keough and Topher Grace. The film was screened in competition in Cannes and was released by A24 domestically in April 2019.

Next up for Bender is STX's "My Spy," to be released on March 13. The film is directed by Pete Segal with Dave Bautista and Kristen Schaal starring.

Additional projects Bender has in development with Good Fear Content include the romantic comedy "Singles Day" at New Line; "Red Queen," an adaptation of the YA New York Times best-seller at Universal; "Milk" at New Line; "Man Alive," a sci-fi project at 20th Century Studios; the feature film version of Dutch filmmaker Nico van den Brink's short horror film "Sweet Tooth," at New Line; and "Sabrina," the story of NFL superstar DeAndre Hopkins' mother, Sabrina Greenlee. For television, he is an executive producer on "Ice Cream Man," which is in development at UCP.

Bender has produced or developed projects that have grown into six franchises in various genres: "Final Destination," "American Pie," "The Ring," "Cats & Dogs," "The Butterfly Effect" and "The Hangover." Eight of his movies have opened at number one, and Bender was nominated for a Golden Globe® Award for the David Cronenberg–directed "A History of Violence."

Other projects produced by Bender include the hit comedy "We're the Millers," starring Jennifer Aniston and Jason Sudeikis; "Horrible Bosses 2," starring Jason Bateman, Jason Sudeikis and Charlie Day; and "Vacation," starring Ed Helms, Christina Applegate and Chris Hemsworth, all for New Line.

JAKE WEINER, p.g.a. (Producer) is partner at Good Fear Content where he is a producer and manager. On the film side, his most recent project on screen as producer was "Under the Silver Lake," directed by David Robert Mitchell and starring Academy Award® nominee Andrew Garfield.

Next up for Weiner is STX's "My Spy." Directed by Pete Segal with Dave Bautista and Kristen Schaal starring, the film will be released March 13.

On the development front, he is producing "Milk" at New Line Cinema, producing with James Wan's Atomic Monster; "Red Queen," an adaptation of the YA New York Times best-seller, at Universal, producing with Elizabeth Banks; "Singles Day," a Chinese-themed romantic comedy spec script by

Lillian Yu; “Man Alive,” a sci-fi project at 20th Century Studios, producing with Noah Hawley and Hiro Murai attached to direct; the feature film version of Dutch filmmaker Nico van den Brink’s short horror film “Sweet Tooth” at New Line Cinema, producing with James Wan’s Atomic Monster; and “Sabrina,” the story of NFL superstar DeAndre Hopkins’ mother, Sabrina Greenlee, producing with Bron. For television, he is an executive producer on “Ice Cream Man,” in development at UCP.

Weiner’s diverse list of clients include writer/director David Robert Mitchell (“It Follows,” “Myth of the American Sleepover”); Humanitas winner and Oscar®-, WGA- and BAFTA-nominated writer Allison Schroeder (“Hidden Figures,” “Frozen 2”); documentarian Clay Tweel (“Gleason,” Netflix’s “The Innocent Man”); and New York Times best-selling author Jennifer Weiner (“In Her Shoes”).

Prior to Good Fear, Weiner was a partner at Benderspink, where he developed New Line’s “The Butterfly Effect” and “Monster-in-Law”; DreamWorks’ “Red Eye” and “I Am Number 4”; and Universal’s “American Wedding.” He served as a co-producer on the critically acclaimed and Golden Globe®–nominated “A History of Violence” and on New Line’s “Just Friends.” He served as a producer on Spyglass/Universal’s “Leap Year,” New Line’s “The Incredible Burt Wonderstone” and Millennium’s “Criminal.”

Weiner began his career at New Line Cinema in 1996 in New York and then Los Angeles, working in production and development. He is a member of the Producers Guild of America.

JASON T. REED, p.g.a. (Producer) is a film and television producer and the owner of Jason T. Reed Productions, a company focused on producing high-quality film, television and digital content, as well as building integrated franchise worlds for a global audience.

Most recently, Reed served as an executive producer on “The Crossing,” a one-hour drama series starring Steve Zahn, Sandrine Holt and Natalie Martinez for ABC; “Of Kings and Prophets,” a nine-episode event series for the ABC network; and Michael Bay’s “Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles” feature film for Paramount Pictures.

Before launching his producing career, Reed was an executive vice president at The Walt Disney Studios, specializing in franchise management and cross-platform development. While there he oversaw a wide range of successful films, including Tim Burton’s “Alice in Wonderland,” “Enchanted,” “Hannah Montana: The Movie,” “Déjà Vu,” “Bringing Down the House,” “The Last Song,” “Calendar Girls,” “Kinky Boots,” “Armageddon,” “Pearl Harbor” and the “National Treasure” franchise. Reed also served as general manager of Walt Disney Studios International Production, a division focused on producing award-winning Disney-branded films in China, Russia, India and the Middle East.

In addition, Reed co-founded and serves as the publisher of Brick Moon Fiction, a media company that produces original science-fiction short stories and audio dramas by working with writers from diverse backgrounds to explore the impact of technology and trends on human society. Building on his experiences at The Walt Disney Company and Brick Moon Fiction, Reed launched a new company, KidPod Theater, which focuses on bringing high-quality family entertainment to podcasting.

Reed received degrees in philosophy and cinema-television production from the University of

Southern California and lives in Los Angeles with his wife and two children.

BILL KONG (Executive Producer) was an Academy Award® nominee and won BAFTA and Independent Spirit Awards as producer of Ang Lee's groundbreaking martial arts epic, "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon" (2000), which won four Academy Awards (best foreign-language film, best art direction/set decoration, best original score and best cinematography) and two Golden Globe® Awards (best foreign-language film and best director). The film was also a blockbuster hit, and became the most popular foreign-language film ever in the U.S.

In 2002, Kong produced an ambitious and acclaimed slate of feature films. They included Sun Zhou's "Zhou Yu's Train," starring Gong Li; Tian Zhuangzhuang's remake of "Springtime in a Small Town," which won prizes at the Toronto and Venice International Film Festivals; and Zhang Yimou's Academy Award®– and Golden Globe® Award–nominated martial arts drama "Hero." "Hero" was Kong's first collaboration with superstar Jet Li and smashed box-office records when it opened in China before continuing on to blockbuster success worldwide.

Kong's subsequent projects include Kwak Jae-young's "Windstruck" (2004), the first Korean film ever to open day-and-date in Korea, Hong Kong and China; Zhang Yimou's Academy Award®– and Golden Globe® Award–nominated "House of Flying Daggers" (2004) and Academy Award–nominated "Curse of the Golden Flower "(2006); a second successful collaboration with Jet Li, "Fearless" (2006), directed by Ronny Yu; "Secret" (2007), written, directed by and starring Jay Chou; and Ang Lee's "Lust, Caution" (2007).

More recently, Kong produced "Cold War" (2012), which won nine Hong Kong Film Awards (best film, best director, best screenplay, best actor, best new performer, best editing, best sound design, best visual effects and best original film score) out of 12 nominations; the Hong Kong Film Awards– and Golden Horse Awards–nominated sequel, "Cold War 2" (2016), which upholds the highest-grossing Chinese film record of all time in Hong Kong; and the mega blockbuster "Monster Hunt" series (2015, 2018).

Kong is also the executive director of Edko Films Ltd, one of the leading film distribution, production and exhibition companies in Asia.

BARRIE M. OSBORNE (Executive Producer) is an Academy Award®–winning producer of "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy. Along with Peter Jackson and Fran Walsh, Osborne was awarded an Academy Award for best picture for "The Return of the King," which also earned him the Producers Guild Award. Additionally, he received best picture Oscar® nominations for the first and second films, "The Fellowship of the Ring" and "The Two Towers." Osborne also won a BAFTA Award for "The Return of the King" and "The Fellowship of the Ring," and garnered a nod for "The Two Towers."

Osborne is currently consulting on Wuershan's Chinese fantasy-based "Feng Shen Trilogy." His other producing credits include John Woo's "Face/Off," "The Water Horse," "The Warrior's Way," "China Moon" and "Syrup." Osborne served as executive producer on "The Meg," "Pete's Dragon," "The Great Gatsby," "The Matrix," "The World's Fastest Indian," "Little Fish," "The Fan," "Dick Tracy," "Child's Play," "Wilder Napalm," "Rapa Nui" and "Peggy Sue Got Married."

During a two-year tenure as vice president for feature production at Walt Disney Pictures, Osborne oversaw features including “Ruthless People,” “The Color of Money,” “Tin Men,” “Three Men and a Baby,” “Tough Guys,” “Outrageous Fortune,” “Who Framed Roger Rabbit” and “Good Morning, Vietnam.”

During a three-year tenure as executive in charge of production for Arnon Milchan’s New Regency Films, Osborne oversaw development of several films, including “Pirates,” and production of “The King of Comedy” and “Once Upon a Time in America.”

A native New Yorker, Osborne earned a B.A. degree from Minnesota’s Carleton College. He served as 1st Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for his service. In 2017, he was honored by New Zealand as an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit. Osborne entered the film industry in 1970. Accepted into the Directors Guild of America trainee program, Osborne worked under the tutelage of directors such as Francis Ford Coppola, Alan Pakula and Sydney Pollack, on films including “The Godfather Part II,” “All the President’s Men” and “Three Days of the Condor.”

He subsequently worked on a number of films in various capacities, including “Apocalypse Now,” “The Big Chill,” “The King of Comedy,” “The Cotton Club,” “Cutter’s Way,” “Fandango” and “The China Syndrome.”

TIM CODDINGTON (Executive Producer) worked his way up the ranks of production by starting as an assistant director on features such as “Savage Islands,” “Clockwise” and “No Surrender.” He later became a unit production manager on “The Chronicles of Narnia” and “The Other Side of Heaven,” where he received his first co-producer credit.

Coddington worked as the producer on Season 1 of MTV’s “The Shannara Chronicles,” as well as co-producer and unit production manager on both seasons of the Primetime Emmy® nominee “Marco Polo.” Additionally, he served as co-producer for Walt Disney Pictures’ “Bridge to Terabithia.”

Coddington was the executive producer for the romantic comedy “Crazy Rich Asians,” which received two Golden Globe® nominations and countless awards, including the ADG Award for best contemporary film, the Critics’ Choice Award for best comedy and the CDG Award for excellence in contemporary film.

MARIO ISCOVICH (Executive Producer) is a veteran filmmaker who recently served as executive producer of “McFarland, USA,” “You Again,” “Race to Witch Mountain” and “Sky High.”

After entering the film business as a personal assistant to movie great Steve McQueen, Iscovich moved into filmmaking as a production consultant on “The Godfather Part II” and “The Domino Principle,” and served as associate producer on “The Runner Stumbles.” He worked as location manager on such films as “Jinxed,” “2010,” “Lost in America,” “Nothing in Common,” “Overboard,” “The Presidio” and “Chances Are” before becoming a producer on such films as “Pretty Woman,” “The Rocketeer,” “Sister Act,” “What’s Love Got to Do With It,” “Sister Act 2: Back in the Habit,”

"Mulholland Falls," "Dear God," "George of the Jungle," "Deep Rising," "The Other Sister," "Runaway Bride," "The Princess Diaries," "Freaky Friday" and "Raising Helen."

Iscovich was born in Argentina and came to America with his parents.

MANDY WALKER (Director of Photography) grew up in Melbourne, Australia, and now lives in Los Angeles.

She progressed through the camera department, starting at 18 years old as a camera assistant, then becoming cinematographer on music videos, short films and documentaries before shooting her first feature at 25 years of age. Walker has since shot 18 feature films, including "The Mountain Between Us" (2017), "Hidden Figures" (2016), "Truth" (2015), "Tracks" (2013), "Australia" (2007) and "Shattered Glass" (2003), along with many commercials.

Walker is also on the board of governors of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, representing the cinematographers branch and recently on its executive committees. She is also on the board for the American Society of Cinematographers; an accredited member and Hall of Fame honoree of the Australian Cinematographers Society; an executive member of Women in Film; and a board member of the NEB of the IATSE Local 600.

Walker has been the recipient of many cinematography awards over the years.

GRANT MAJOR (Production Designer) was nominated for four Academy Awards® and four British Academy of Film and Television Arts Awards (BAFTA) for his work as a production designer on "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy and "King Kong." Major won an American Film Institute Award for "The Fellowship of the Ring" as well as an Art Directors Guild Award for "The Two Towers" and again for "The Return of the King." Major finally claimed his Academy Award and a Los Angeles Film Critics Society Award on the third installment of the trilogy, "The Return of the King." He was nominated by the International Press Association for a Satellite Award in 2003 for both "The Return of the King" and his work as production designer on "Whale Rider," winning for "The Return of the King."

Previously, Major received a New Zealand Film and Television Award for best design on Peter Jackson's "Heavenly Creatures" in 1995. Two years later Major picked up the same award for "The Ugly" and again in 2010 for "The Vintner's Luck." Major's other film credits include Jackson's "The Frighteners," "Memory and Desire," "An Angel at My Table," "Mister Pip," "Emperor," "Green Lantern," "Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: Legend of the Green Destiny," "X-Men: Apocalypse," "The Meg" and, as art director, "Other Halves." Major's work as an art director for television includes telefilms "Hercules" and "The Grasscutter," the series "Hanlon," as well as commercials and news programs.

Born in Palmerston North, New Zealand, Major began his career in design at Television New Zealand. His background ranges from production design for Commonwealth Games ceremonies to designer for the New Zealand Pavilions at the World Expos to design consultant for the Louis Vuitton 150th-year party N.Y., Hong Kong, Tokyo and Paris.

Major received an honorary doctorate from his alma mater, the Auckland University of Technology, and in 2005 became a Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit, awarded by the New Zealand government for services to the New Zealand Film Industry.

New Zealander **DAVID COULSON (Film Editor**) has edited six features directed by Niki Caro, including the Academy Award®–nominated "Whale Rider" and "North Country," "A Heavenly Vintage," "McFarland, USA," "The Zookeeper's Wife" and now "Mulan."

Coulson has won the New Zealand Film and Television Award for best feature editing three times: for Leon Narbey's "The Footstep Man" and "Illustrious Energy," and for Gregor Nicholas' "Broken English." The latter also brought him the best editing award at the Asia-Pacific Film Festival.

Coulson's television work includes the pilot for Netflix's "Anne with an 'E'," for which he received a Canadian Screen Awards best editing nomination; "Pacific 3, 2, 1, Zero," for which he again won a New Zealand Film and Television Award; and "Fortitude," an episode of the "Kurt Vonnegut's Monkey House" series, which won three CableACE Awards. He has edited several drama series and documentaries, including "Behind Closed Doors," which won the Blue Ribbon Award at the American Film and TV Festival, New York. For his television commercial work, he has received New Zealand Advertising Gold, Silver and Bronze Axis Editing Awards.

He has also edited numerous award-winning short films including "Night Shift," "Kitchen Sink" and "The Beach," which were all nominated for the Palme d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival.

BINA DAIGELER (Costume Designer) previously collaborated with director Niki Caro on "The Zookeeper's Wife." Other recent credits include Anne Fletcher's "Dumplin'," starring Jennifer Aniston; José Padilha's hijacking drama "7 Days in Entebbe," starring Rosamund Pike; Wim Wenders' "Submergence," starring Alicia Vikander; and Oliver Stone's "Snowden," starring Joseph Gordon-Levitt.

Daigeler has also worked on hugely successful television series, such as Netflix's critically acclaimed shows "Narcos" and "El Tiempo Entre Costuras," and most recently on Dahvi Waller's "Mrs. America" for FX, starring Cate Blanchett and Elizabeth Banks. Daigeler previously collaborated with Blanchett on "Manifesto," directed by the German video artist Julian Rosefeldt, which was a major success in the art world and also awarded Daigeler with the German Film Award for best costume design.

Daigeler landed her first job as a costume designer in Spain on Juanma Bajo Ulloa's "Airbag," a huge box-office hit, which led her to then work on Pedro Almodóvar's "All About My Mother" and "Volver." For these two films—along with her costume design for Joaquín Oristrell's "Unconscious" and Fernando León de Aranoa's "Princesas"—Daigeler received four Goya Awards nominations for her costume design.

HARRY GREGSON-WILLIAMS (Music Composed by) is one of Hollywood's most sought-after and prolific composers, whose long list of film and television credits underscores the diverse range of

his talents. "Mulan" marks the second time Gregson-Williams has worked with director Niki Caro, having scored her film "The Zookeeper's Wife," which was released in 2017.

Gregson-Williams was the composer on all four installments of the animated blockbuster "Shrek" franchise, garnering a BAFTA Award nomination for the score for the Oscar®-winning "Shrek." He also received Golden Globe® and GRAMMY® Award nominations for his score for Andrew Adamson's "The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe." He has collaborated multiple times with a number of directors, including Ben Affleck on the films "Live by Night," "The Town" and "Gone Baby Gone"; Joel Schumacher on "Twelve," "The Number 23," "Veronica Guerin" and "Phone Booth"; Tony Scott on "Unstoppable," "The Taking of Pelham 1 2 3," "Déjà Vu," "Domino," "Man on Fire," "Spy Game" and "Enemy of the State"; Ridley Scott on "The Martian," "Prometheus," "Exodus: Gods and Kings" and "Kingdom of Heaven"; Bille August on "Return to Sender" and "Smilla's Sense of Snow"; Andrew Adamson on the Shrek series, the first two Narnia movies and "Mr. Pip"; and Antoine Fuqua on "The Replacement Killers," "The Equalizer" and "The Equalizer 2."

His many other credits include the scores for Disneynature's "Penguins"; "The Meg," directed by Jon Turteltaub; Simon Baker's directorial debut, "Breath"; the telefilm "Confirmation"; Catherine Hardwicke's "Miss You Already"; "Blackhat," for director Michael Mann; Len Wiseman's "Total Recall"; Jon Favreau's "Cowboys & Aliens"; the documentary "Life in a Day"; Mike Newell's "Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time"; Gavin Hood's "X-Men Origins: Wolverine"; and Beeban Kidron's "Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason." Gregson-Williams has also created the scores for a variety of animated features, including Aardman Animations' "Arthur Christmas," "Flushed Away," the Oscar®-winning "Chicken Run"; DreamWorks' "Antz" and most recently Aardman Animations' "Early Man' directed by Nick Park, for which he received an Annie Award nomination.

Gregson-Williams' recent television projects include "Manhunt: Deadly Games" for Lionsgate Television and the limited series "Catch-22," directed and executive produced by George Clooney for Hulu, which premiered in May 2019. He also wrote the music for the ABC action dramedy series "Whiskey Cavalier," starring Scott Foley, which premiered in February 2019. Previously he created the main title theme and scored two episodes for Amazon's 10-episode sci-fi anthology series "Philip K. Dick's Electric Dreams." For the episode titled "The Commuter," he received an Emmy® nomination.

Other projects for 2020 include Antoine Fuqua's feature film "Infinite," starring Mark Wahlberg and Chiwetel Ejiofor.

Gregson-Williams has scored three of the five games in the highly successful "Metal Gear Solid" franchise for Konami and scored "Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare" for Activision, which became the top-selling video game of 2014 and earned him various music gaming awards. Throughout his career, Gregson-Williams has collaborated with a diverse array of recording artists such as Regina Spektor, Imogen Heap, Tricky, Peter Murphy, Flea, Hybrid, Paul Oakenfold, Sasha, Trevor Horn, Trevor Rabin, Lebo M., Perry Farrell and Tony Visconti.

Born in England to a musical family, Gregson-Williams earned a music scholarship to St. John's College, Cambridge, at the age of 7 and later gained a coveted spot at London's Guildhall School of Music & Drama, from which he recently received an honorary fellowship. He started his film career as assistant to composer Richard Harvey and later as orchestrator and arranger for Stanley Myers,

and then went on to compose his first scores for director Nicolas Roeg. His subsequent collaboration and friendship with composer Hans Zimmer led to Gregson-Williams providing music for such films as “The Rock,” “Armageddon” and “The Prince of Egypt” and helped launch his career in Hollywood.

In 2018, Gregson-Williams received the BMI Icon Award, in recognition of his unique and indelible influence on generations of music makers, and the Society of Composers & Lyricists’ prestigious Ambassador Award. He has also been a regular mentor at the Sundance Composers Lab, working directly with talented emerging composers from all over the world.

DENISE KUM (Hair, Make-up and Prosthetics Designer) studied sculpture at the Elam School of Fine Arts in Auckland, New Zealand. In 1999, she moved to London where she completed a Master of Fine Arts at Goldsmiths College. Her artwork was included in public collections at the Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa, The Financial Times London, Saatchi & Saatchi and the Chartwell Collection, Auckland. Her long-standing fascination with materiality led her to start a career in prosthetics and makeup.

On Disney’s “Mulan,” Kum reunited with director Niki Caro, having worked with her on several films previously, including “The Zookeeper’s Wife,” with Jessica Chastain; “North Country,” with Charlize Theron; and the critically acclaimed “Whale Rider,” for which she was nominated for the New Zealand Film and TV Awards.

Kum’s work as a hair and makeup designer will also be seen in the upcoming Marie Curie biopic, “Radioactive,” directed by Marjane Satrapi and starring Rosamund Pike.

Other feature film work includes Gillian Armstrong’s “Death Defying Acts,” starring Catherine Zeta-Jones, Guy Pearce and Saoirse Ronan; Brad McGann’s “In My Father’s Den,” with Matthew Macfadyen; Sergio G. Sánchez’s “The Secret of Marrowbone,” featuring George MacKay and Anya Taylor-Joy; “7 Days in Entebbe,” directed by Jose Padilha, with Rosamund Pike and Daniel Bruhl; and Matthew Heineman’s “A Private War” (a bio of war correspondent Marie Colvin), also starring Rosamund Pike.

Kum designed makeup, hair and prosthetics on two seasons of “Spartacus: Blood and Sand”; Sam Raimi’s first episode of “Ash vs Evil Dead”; and previously worked with director Dominic Savage on the ITV movie “Dive.”

Kum is currently working with director John Madden on an adaptation of Ben McIntyre’s “Operation Mincemeat,” starring Colin Firth, Matthew Macfadyen and Kelly Macdonald.

SEAN FADEN (VFX Supervisor) most recently worked as a consulting VFX supervisor for Disney’s live-action “Lady and the Tramp,” helping to design key sequences with the director and formalizing an initial strategy for the complicated CG dog work needed.

Prior to these productions, Faden completed work supervising the VFX for Lionsgate’s “Power Rangers,” working for 18 months in prep, previs, on-set and post. In addition he contributed several weeks as an additional 2nd unit director (which gave him an opportunity to join the DGA).

Faden worked for over three years at Pixomondo, supervising VFX work on “Fantastic Four,” “A Good Day to Die Hard,” “Fast & Furious 6,” as well as several episodes for “Game of Thrones” Season 3. “A Good Day to Die Hard” saw Faden on set in Budapest for two months helping to plan and shoot the movie’s climactic ending. While at Pixomondo, he also collaborated with Justin Lin to help create the dramatic airplane sequence for the pilot episode of CBS’s series “Scorpion.”

In 2012, while at Method Studios, Faden co-directed three long-form, live-action spots for Xbox Kinect Star Wars titled “Duel,” starring Chris Pratt, “Girly Vader,” and “X-Wing”—mixing HD footage from the original “Star Wars” with live-action footage to recreate classic scenes with a modern twist.

Faden has contributed as VFX supervisor for numerous high-profile film and commercial projects, including “Let Me In,” “Captain America,” “The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo,” “The Purge” and “The Amityville Horror.” He was both the on-set VFX supervisor and 2nd unit director for the feature “A Nightmare on Elm Street.” His commercial experience as a VFX supervisor and on-set VFX supervisor includes collaborating with some of the top directors in the industry, including David Fincher, Michael Mann, Mark Romanek, Noam Murro and Tom Kuntz.

After graduating with a mechanical engineering degree from UCLA, Faden began in the industry by creating CAD-designed miniatures for “The Fifth Element” and “Titanic” at Digital Domain before transitioning to its digital artist team.

In addition to his directing and on-set supervision skills, Faden drew from his experience as a CG supervisor for features such as “Terminator: Salvation,” “Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man’s Chest,” “The Day After Tomorrow,” “XXX” and “Time Machine,” having spent many years working in digital FX and camera animation.

In 2013, he directed an aerial unit in China, shooting locations all over the country for a Wanda ride film entitled “Hubei in the Air.” Between 2014 and 2015 he directed a four-minute, stereo 4k, live-action/CG commercial promoting one of Franco Dragone’s latest theater shows for Wanda in China, entitled the “Xi Show.”